

NUTRITION NO-NOS

THRESHOLD WORKOUT

CANADIAN

Running

GOALS!

Reflect
Regroup
Recharge
for
2025

TSN's ➡
**Kate
Beirness**

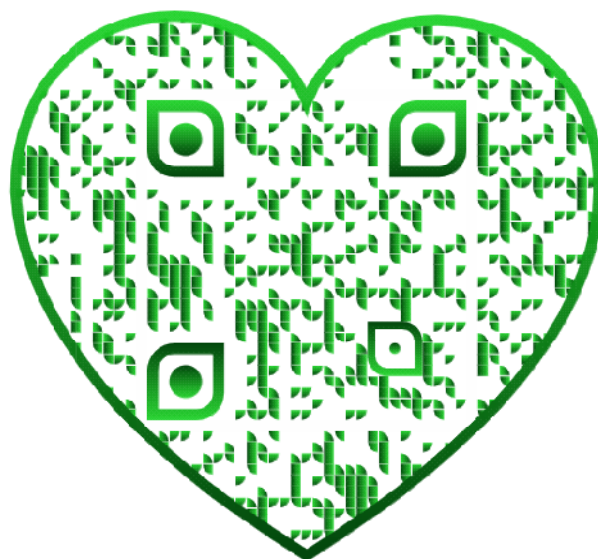


GOLDEN SHOE AWARDS

Celebrating the
Best of 2024

**TRAINING APPS
AND PRIVACY**
Are You Protected?

How Sick Is
TOO SICK TO RUN?



LEGEANDARY



THE NEW

Lone Peak 9

www.altrarunning.com



FEATURES

Goals, Goals, Goals

26 Whether you're focused on a single goal or planning out a full year of training and races, here's how to evaluate what's gone right and what could go better as 2025 unfolds.

By Molly Hurford

Private Eyes

32 You've heard it before, but it bears repeating: in the age of digital everything, privacy is increasingly an issue—particularly for athletes using smartphones, watches and activity trackers. It's incumbent on users to protect themselves; here's how to stay safe.

By Andrea Hill

Golden Shoe Awards

36 It's January, which means it's time to recognize the most electric performances and the most deserving athletes, coaches and supporters from the past year in Canadian running.

By Marley Dickinson, Paul Baswick, Madeleine Kelly, Brooke Smith and Paul Gains

DEPARTMENTS

3 Editorial

4 Run in Focus

5 The Warmup

FOOD

6 Runner's Kitchen

Best Brunches

By Kim Doerksen

RECIPES Cinnamon French Toast, Baked Berry Oatmeal, Winter Tart

8 Fuel Station

By Megan Kuikman

Nutrition Mistakes

BODY WORK

12 Exercises

By Jon-Erik Kawamoto

Intro to Gym-Based Strength Training

15 One Workout

Threshold Workout

16 The Science of Running

By Alex Hutchinson

Marathon Mind

18 Training Zone

AI Training Plans

20 The Fix

Should You Train When You're Sick?

PLACES

22 Canadian Trails

Calgary, Alta.

24 Exotic Destination

Skye Half-Marathon, Scotland

GEAR

46 Hot Gear for Cold Weather

Warm Wardrobes for Winter Running

61 Club Scene

Turf Run Club, Vancouver

62 Running Celebrity

Broadcaster Kate Beirness, Toronto

64 Crossing the Line

When Might a Canadian Conquer Boston?

Anything Goes



When sports science writer Alex Hutchinson delivered his Science of Running column for this issue (p.16), it struck a chord. Perhaps no other marathon carries the emotional weight that the Boston Marathon does. It’s the most prestigious marathon in the world, and it’s not an easy course; if you run well there, I imagine the resulting high must be higher than you get anywhere else. But I wouldn’t know, because my Boston experience was one of crushing disappointment (I’m talking about my performance, not the race itself), and I’ve always been a little embarrassed about how I reacted (I started sobbing on the course). A bit much, right? But as Hutchinson’s column makes clear, having an emotional breakdown during a marathon is actually pretty common, which is both reassuring and fascinating.

Speaking of marathons, as I write this, we are still basking in the afterglow of the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, which is now the biggest race weekend in Canada, with 30,000 participants. It’s inspiring to see so many different types of runners, most of them smiling and happy and all with different running goals. Some are there to push themselves, some to raise money for causes that are dear to them and some just to have fun with their friends.

Most of our readers are here because they enjoy reading about running and they want to get better at it. For others running is something they engage in from time to time. They may enter a race on a whim, and then wonder how much faster they could go if they trained. And some don’t run at all, but are fans of the sport. And that’s OK.

It’s all OK, and you are all welcome here, emotions and all.

Anne Francis, Editor
@CanadianRunning



ON THE COVER

Though basketball has always been broadcaster **KATE BEIRNESS**’s first love (she played in high school and is currently a host on TSN’s *SportsCentre*), in recent years she has embraced marathon running. For more on Beirness, 40, see p.62.

PHOTO Jess Baumung

ONLINE

runningmagazine.ca
Visit for breaking running news, features, product reviews, recipes and your favourite writers.

Members can access all magazine content online:
members.runningmagazine.ca

Follow us

on Facebook
[@CanadianRunningMagazine](#)
[@CanTrailRunning](#)

on X
[@CanadianRunning](#)
[@CanTrailRunning](#)

on Instagram
[@CanadianRunning](#)
[@CanadianTrailRunning](#)

on YouTube
[Canadian Running Magazine](#)

on TikTok
[@CanadianRunningMag](#)

CANADIAN Running

Editor Anne Francis
anne@runningmagazine.ca
Senior Editor Alex Hutchinson
Staff Writers
Marley Dickinson, Madeleine Kelly,
Keeley Milne, Cameron Ormond

Photo Editor Matt Stetson
matt.stetson@gripped.com

Copy Editor Rebecca Tucker

Art Director Warren Wheeler (Roseander Main)
layout@runningmagazine.ca

Production Artist Warren Hardy

Social Media
Nikita van Dijk nikita@gripped.com

Affiliate Marketing Cory Nagler

Web Development Sean Rasmussen

Digital Operations Dmitry Benjaminov

Publisher Sam Cohen
sam@gripped.com

Editorial Director David Smart
dave@gripped.com

Advertising & Sales Andre Cheuk
andre@gripped.com

Account Managers
Joel Vosburg joel@gripped.com
Catherine Melo catherine@gripped.com

Circulation Manager
Robyn Milburn robyn@gripped.com

SUBSCRIBE
Send \$26.95 (1 year) or \$49.95 (2 years) to
Canadian Running magazine, PO Box 819 Station Main,
Markham, ON, Canada L3P 8L3 or call:
1 (800) 567-0444

SUBMIT
Manuscripts, photographs and other correspondence are welcome. Please contact *Canadian Running* magazine for contributors’ guidelines, or see them on the web at runningmagazine.ca. Unsolicited material should be accompanied by return mailing address and postage.

Canadian Running Magazine
1 (416) 927-0774, runningmagazine.ca

Gripped Publishing Inc.
75 Harbord St. Toronto, ON, Canada M5S 1G4

Copyright 2025 Gripped Publishing Inc.
The contents of this magazine may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the express consent of the publisher. The views included herein are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publisher, owners and management of *Canadian Running* magazine. We occasionally make our list available to companies of interest to our readers.

Canadian publication mail agreement: 40036245
ISSN: 1916-3614 Printed in Canada



Fresh Foam X 1080v14

Comfortable. Breathable. Versatile.





 RUN IN FOCUS

Christy McLean runs the valley
bottom trails of Revelstoke, B.C.'s
Mount Cartier

PHOTO RYAN CREARY



Ruth Chepngetich after breaking the women's marathon world record in Chicago

Natasha Wodak and Justin Kent win Canadian Marathon Championships

On Oct. 20 at the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, Justin Kent of Surrey, B.C., and Canadian marathon record holder and two-time Olympian Natasha Wodak won the men's and women's Canadian Marathon Championships, in 2:12:17 and 2:27:54, respectively. It was a personal best for Kent, who was cheered on by his wife, former 800m national champion Lindsey Butterworth, and their five-month-old daughter, Willa.

For Wodak, it was her first time returning to the race where she made her marathon debut in 2013, and it was the only national title she had not yet won. It was also her fastest marathon since setting the Canadian record at 2:23:12 at the 2022 Berlin Marathon.

Andrew Davies and Leslie Sexton win 2024 Canadian XC Championships

On a snowy Dec. 1 in London, Ont., Andrew Davies and Leslie Sexton, both members of the Vancouver Thunderbirds Track Club, captured victories in the men's and women's 10K races, respectively. For Davies, it was his first senior national title; Sexton is a veteran of the marathon and cross-country scenes, but this was her first ACXC title. Max Turek of Whitby, Ont., and Mitch Ubene of Tecumseh, Ont., finished second and third in the men's race. Paige Breedon of Barrie, Ont., and Alyshia Alkerton of Brockville, Ont., rounded out the women's podium.

Western Mustangs and Queen's Gaels Win U Sports Cross-Country

At the Canadian U Sports cross-country championships held on Nov. 9 in Kelowna, B.C., the Western Mustangs women's team and the Queen's Gaels men both broke long droughts to bring home the team championship trophies—34 years for the Western women and 40 for the Queen's men. The UBC Thunderbirds and the Victoria Vikes were second and third in the women's 8K race, and the Sherbrooke Vert et Or and the Laval Rouge et Or were second and third on the men's side.

Individual titles were won by Lauren McNeil of UBC Okanagan and Université Laval's Philippe Morneau-Cartier (for the second year in a row). Constance Nankivell of Trinity Western University was second in the women's race, and Madelyn Eybergen of the Windsor Lancers was third. On the men's side, Jared Howse of the UNB Reds and Jonathan Podbielski of the Regina Cougars took the other two podium spots. [R](#)

THE WARMUP

Ruth Chepngetich marathon world record draws speculation

On Oct. 13 at the Bank of America Chicago Marathon, Kenya's Ruth Chepngetich set a historic first, running 2:09:57 and taking almost two minutes off Tigst Assefa's previous marathon world record, set just over a year earlier, at the 2023 Berlin Marathon.

Chepngetich didn't come out of nowhere; it was her third victory at Chicago. And it was only a matter of time before a woman broke the 2:10 barrier in the marathon. Yet, despite her demonstrated bona fides in the sport, Chepngetich's performance drew skepticism from some who speculated openly about doping. After *LetsRun.com*'s Robert Johnson asked her how she would respond to such questions, the Kenyan government effectively killed the messenger, demanding an apology, while others pointed out that no one ever publicly questioned the legitimacy of Eliud Kipchoge's or Kelvin Kiptum's world records.

Will we see more sub-2:10 performances by the world's fastest female marathoners in 2025? Undoubtedly.

Corrections September & October 2024

Club Scene

The writer's byline was incorrect; her name is Shannon Lough.

Runner's Kitchen (Recipes)

In the Roasted Cauliflower Bolognese recipe (p.10), the ingredients call for soy sauce (optional), but the directions refer to fish sauce; writer Kim Doerksen says either (or neither) is fine, though they yield different flavours.

Thank you to Jodi McNeill of Orangeville, Ont., and Tracy BridgeArnold of Wallaceburg, Ont., for pointing this out.



Best Brunches

Nothing beats a hearty, post-run breakfast



By **Kim Doerksen**

These breakfast ideas are sure to get your day started off right—especially at this time of year. There’s nothing quite like coming home to a delicious brunch after a long run. (These recipes can be prepared ahead of time or made the day of.)

With the warm flavour of cinnamon and the decadence of cream cheese frosting, this French toast recipe is a certain crowd pleaser. The baked oatmeal can be customized to suit flavour preferences and seasonal fruits. (Serve with Greek yogurt to boost the protein content.)

Using in-season ingredients for the winter tart, this savoury option can be paired with a soft-yolk egg for a protein boost. Featuring sharp cheeses, fresh herbs and greens and winter vegetables, this light pastry makes a great dinner option, too.

Cinnamon French Toast

Ingredients

French toast

- 6 large eggs
- 1 ½ cups whole milk
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 loaf bread (challah or brioche), sliced into 1-inch slices
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- butter, for the pan
- Whipped cream cheese frosting**
- ¼ cup cream cheese, at room temperature
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1-2 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



Directions

1. In a 9x13-inch baking dish, whisk together the eggs, milk, vanilla, nutmeg and a pinch of salt. Add the bread slices and turn to coat. Let the bread sit 10 minutes, then flip and let the other side sit for 10 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, combine sugar and cinnamon.
3. To make the whipped cream cheese: using an electric mixer, whip cream cheese and cream together until soft peaks form. Add maple syrup and vanilla and whip to combine.
4. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook the toast until light golden, two to three minutes, then flip and cook another three to five minutes, until deeply golden.
5. Sprinkle the cinnamon sugar on each piece. Flip the toast, cinnamon-sugar side down, and cook two to three minutes, until the sugar is golden brown and caramelized.
6. Plate the french toast cinnamon-sugar side up. Sprinkle lightly with cinnamon sugar. Serve with whipped cream and maple syrup.

Baked Berry Oatmeal

Ingredients

- 1 ripe banana, mashed (½ cup)
- 1 cup unsweetened nut milk of choice, at room temperature
- ¼ cup smooth nut butter of choice
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- ¼ cup melted coconut oil
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 2 cups whole rolled oats
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1 cup choice of berries or other fruit, fresh or frozen
- 2 tbsp brown sugar, for topping
- 2 tbsp shredded coconut, for topping

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 F and grease an 8x8-inch or similar baking dish.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the mashed banana, milk, nut butter, maple syrup and coconut oil. Add the baking powder, cinnamon and salt and whisk again.
3. Fold in the oats, ¾ cup of the chopped nuts and ½ cup of the fruit. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish and smooth into an even layer.
4. Top with the remaining ½ cup fruit, the remaining ¼ cup chopped nuts, brown sugar and coconut flakes.
5. Bake 40 to 50 minutes, or until the topping is crisp and the middle is set. Remove from the oven and let cool for 10 minutes before serving.





Winter Tart

Ingredients

- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled and cubed (~4 cups)
- 8 small shallots, peeled, root ends trimmed, and halved
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 frozen puff pastry sheet, thawed
- 3 oz. Gruyère cheese, shredded (about ¾ cup)
- 3 oz. fontina cheese, shredded (about ¾ cup)
- 2 large egg yolks
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 1 lemon (1 tsp grated lemon zest, plus 1 tsp fresh juice, divided)
- 2 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tsp sherry vinegar
- 1 cup loosely packed baby arugula (about ½ oz.)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 F. Toss together squash, shallots, oil, nutmeg, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Spread mixture in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Bake until vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes. Let cool.
2. While vegetables cool, roll pastry sheet into a 16x10-inch rectangle on a large piece of parchment paper. Carefully transfer parchment paper to a large baking sheet. Using a paring knife, score a one-inch border around edges of pastry rectangle; prick area inside border with a fork. Bake until light golden, about 12 minutes.
3. Stir together Gruyère, fontina, egg yolks, sour cream, lemon zest, thyme, vinegar, squash mixture, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Gently spread mixture inside border of baked pastry rectangle.
4. Return to the oven and bake until the cheese is melted and crust is golden brown, about 12 minutes.
5. Toss together arugula, lemon juice and a sprinkle of salt; sprinkle over top of tart. Cut tart into four (or more) pieces and serve immediately. **R**

Kim Doerksen is Canadian Running's food writer and an elite runner in Vancouver.



Top 5 Nutrition Pitfalls

How to avoid common fuelling errors

By Megan Kuikman

When it comes to runners' diets, there are some common mistakes that could compromise their health and performance goals. Be informed!

Not eating enough carbohydrates

Many runners purposely avoid carbohydrates, and even runners who are not avoiding carbs sometimes fail to consume enough. Most of this relates to misconceptions about carbohydrates being unhealthy or fattening, when they should be the cornerstone of an endurance athlete's diet. If a runner wants to perform at their best, they shouldn't be eliminating carbohydrate-rich foods, such as bread, pasta, cereal, rice, potatoes and fruit, from their diet.

Not periodizing food intake to training

A runner's calorie needs will change drastically from day to day, based on their training. Most runners fail to consume enough calories on hard training days and then feel ravenous the following day, when, typically, an easy run or rest day is scheduled. Undereating on hard days is common, as changes in hormones with hard exercise can suppress appetite. Even if a runner doesn't feel hungry, they still need to fuel appropriately on hard training days to help with recovery and prevent rebound hunger. However, if a runner does feel hungrier on days with little to no exercise, this shouldn't be ignored. It's likely a sign that not enough calories were consumed the day before, and extra fuel is needed to make up for it.

Backloading calories

Runners should also consider how calorie intake is distributed throughout the day. For instance, they may consume enough calories over a day, but spend most of the day in a calorie deficit if consuming most of their food in the evening. This is especially the case for runners who train in the morning and then don't fuel properly afterward, which can have a negative impact on health and performance. Runners shouldn't neglect fuelling before and after exercise, and should ensure they are consuming adequate meals and snacks throughout the day.

Following nutrition advice for non-athletes

Nutrition is context-dependent. What is healthy for one person may not be healthy for another. Runners often follow and incorporate nutrition advice for non-athletes into their eating habits, such as following fad diets or trends, but runners have different nutrition needs than the general population, due to the demands of training. Nutrition advice needs to be personalized, not only to exercise and training goals, but also various other factors that can impact nutrition requirements (such as age or health status).

Failing to practise race-day nutrition

Having a race-day nutrition plan is key to reaching your performance goals for endurance events. This includes what you eat before and during competition. Many runners only start practising race-day nutrition a few weeks out from their goal race, or don't practise at all. Fuelling strategies need to be practised well in advance; just as the body is trained for race day, the gut also needs to be trained. Practising a race-day nutrition plan allows runners to toe the start line with confidence.

A sports dietitian can help spot fuelling errors to help runners reach their performance goals. **R**

Megan Kuikman is an avid runner and registered dietitian with a passion for sports nutrition. She is currently completing her PhD with an aim to address gender gaps in exercise science research. She can be reached at hello@megankuikmanRD.ca.



UNDER ARMOUR.



 **COLDGEAR®**

WEAR COLDGEAR® WHEN IT'S COLD

COLDGEAR®

COLDGEAR®

COLDGEAR®

AVAILABLE AT [UA.CA](https://ua.ca)

NORDA

One Giant Leap for Trail Kind

This Canadian brand is building a legacy around the world, one trail shoe at a time

By Molly Hurford



If trail running could be a brand, it would be norda. The beauty of a narrow trail opening into an alpine meadow. The pain of an uphill, snowy slog. The elation at the sight of a mountain vista. The gut-clenching realization that, 50 miles into a race, you’ve actually only just hit the halfway mark. The deep sense of accomplishment when you do cross the finish line. The absolute love and devotion—the *everything*—that you give to the sport. Trail running has a way of tearing us down to the bare essentials, opening us up and showing us who we are, deep inside. The same could be said of running a business—which may explain why norda’s founders, Nick and Willa Martire, are still avid trail runners themselves. And it definitely explains norda’s unique approach to what a trail shoe should be.

Norda is the shoe that you’ve seen at trail races, but weren’t sure what it was. That’s intentional: the Canadian brand purposely isn’t ostentatious with its logos, and the shoe colours tend to be muted. But once the race starts, the shoes speak for themselves. The grippiness over roots and rocks is unparalleled. The shoes allow your feet to speak to the trail, to finesse your way over obstacles—it’s not barefoot running, but it has almost the same sense of freedom, thanks to the shoe’s construction and materials.

How do you build a trail shoe that’s long-lasting, that can stand up to any trail conditions, that grips any rocks or roots and that won’t rip when you hit the dirt? You have to do something no one else is doing.

Bio-Dyneema is the key—a material that is essentially bombproof, that was being used in body armour and netting, or ultralight backpacks or tents. The only problem was, no one was using it for shoes.

That was the challenge that Quebec native Louis-Martin Tremblay signed on for. “The number-one priority in a trail shoe, for me, was durability,” he recalls. “My trail shoes would last 100 kilometres, and then rip. It just gets very frustrating, spending so much on footwear, then throwing away the shoe after a month. So using Dyneema was exciting.”

“It took us two years to figure out how to weave Bio-Dyneema into a shoe so that it was malleable and flexible,” says Nick Martire. “We wanted to make our shoe as light and seamless as possible, so there would be no weak points or friction.”

The shoe also needed a sole that would grip any obstacle, but wouldn’t immediately begin to wear down. That meant combining Vibram’s MegaGrip and LiteBase to give traction without heavy weight, and creating a different tread pattern and grip inspired by Canadian Shield terrain.





Shoes designed with the Canadian runner in mind

Norda began with a basic trail shoe, the 001. From the 001, the line has developed—but with a capsule approach to a shoe wardrobe. The 002 was a nod to runners who prefer more connection to the ground, says Tremblay.

Because the brand is based in Canada, it stands to reason that the next challenge they'd focus on would be creating the perfect winter running shoe. So, the G+ Spike model came next, with its thermo-regulating graphene membrane and carbide ice spikes built into the sole, speaking to the winter runners who brave snowdrifts and icy trails to log miles.

Norda also added a slip-on model that, at first glance, doesn't seem like part of a capsule collection of essential footwear. But it's actually become one of their most popular shoes, because it's perfect for casual hikes and rambles, post-race walkabouts and dog walks.

Making the shoes durable meant that when their "665 athletes"—the

brand's elite trail team—asked for a race-day shoe, norda refused to comply. Instead, they created a race *days* shoe, the 005, coming in early 2025. Rather than being designed as single-use, it's lighter and speedier than their other shoes, but can last through at least a few race days—on any terrain.

Building the norda fam

Trail running is a community; a family. Whether you're at a local group run or race, or you're at one of the biggest races in the world, you feel like you're part of something. And that's what norda has created with their athletes and ambassadors, a rich tapestry of runners who span from global adventurers like Ray Zahab to well-known ultrarunners like Jenny Quilty to those who simply exemplify a deep passion for the sport, like former Olympic-heptathlete-turned-trail-runner Alena Pantis. These are the people the Martires wanted to bring together.

"We always wanted to prioritize athletes who had the same values as we did at norda," says Willa. "Where most brands are just about winning, we wanted to cultivate a team where there's a wide range of athlete types, but they all support each other on equal terms."

As Nick says, norda's tendency has always been to zig when other brands zag. They look less at the numbers and more at the people who are wearing their shoes: What do they need? Who do they want to be on the trails?

"That's at the heart of norda," says Willa Martire. "We support Ray's Impossible2Possible charity. We also support Nordiq Canada, which is the cross-country national ski team. We don't talk about it much, the same way we don't put our logos in huge letters on the shoes. We don't talk much about the number of women we work with, from athletes to the women who run the factory where the shoes are made."

"Our mantra at norda is *show me, don't tell me*," she adds. "Just show the world what you're doing." ■





Starting Strong

An introductory strength-training routine for runners

By Jon-Erik Kawamoto

When it comes to running, many athletes focus on logging miles, perfecting their form and optimizing their nutrition, but overlooking one crucial element: strength training. While running builds cardiovascular endurance and stamina, strength training can enhance performance, prevent injuries and promote overall resilience. Whether you're a seasoned marathoner or an occasional runner, strength training is a must. A stronger runner will always outperform a weaker runner.

Your intro to strength-training workouts

Below are two strength-training workouts that you can perform at home or in the gym during the week. The exercises are geared toward strengthening the major muscle groups involved in running. Strive for good exercise technique before increasing weight or speed of movement. Feel free to not use weight for the first two to three weeks as you focus on your form, but then gradually add weight as you become more comfortable. If an exercise causes soreness that doesn't seem "normal" after a workout, consider adjusting your form, reduce the weight or number of repetitions or stop the exercise completely. Note that starting an exercise routine will lead to delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS), which may leave your legs feeling tired and heavy during the first few runs after your strength workout. This is normal, and will subside with consistency in the gym.

A sample week may look like this:

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Easy run long	Strength Workout 1	Easy run short to medium	Fartlek or interval running workout	Strength Workout 2	Rest Day	Fartlek or interval running workout



Strength Workout 1

A1 Split squat

Stand on your left leg and take a large step back with your right leg. With your right toes on the floor, your right heel in the air and your torso upright, bend both knees as you lower your right knee. Touch your knee gently to the floor, then return to the starting position. Do 12 repetitions per side, then move on to exercise A2. To load this exercise, hold a small dumbbell in each hand, at your sides.

A2 Single-leg glute bridge

Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor and your feet and knees together. Tuck your hips to flatten your lower back. Raise your right knee and bring it toward your right shoulder. Then press your left foot into the floor to lift your hips. Try to form a straight line from your left knee to your left shoulder. Return your hips to the floor and repeat this motion 15 times. Switch sides and complete your reps on the right. Take a 60–90-second break, then return to exercise A1. Do four total sets. To load this exercise, rest a dumbbell across your hips.



B1 Calf raise

Stand on the edge of a stair or stable platform with your heels hanging over the edge. Holding a rail for balance, slowly lower your heels below the surface of the stair or platform. Press your forefeet into the stair to raise your heels as high as you can. Try to place your weight across your toes (especially your big toe). Slowly return to the starting position and complete 12 repetitions. Then move on to exercise B2. To load this exercise, stand on one leg.

B2 Bird dog

Get on your hands and knees with your hands under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. Brace your abs to prevent your low back from sagging. Then lift one arm and the opposite leg to the horizontal position and hold for three seconds, then lower the arm and leg and switch sides. Complete 15 reps per side, then return to exercise B1. Do four sets. To load this exercise, add ankle weights.

Strength Workout 2

A1 Single-leg Romanian deadlift

Stand on your left foot and soften your left knee. Bow forward while lifting your right leg behind you. Keep a straight line from your right shoulder to your right ankle. Hold your arms out to the side for balance, or hold onto a wall or rack. Try to bow until your chest/shoulders and hips are square to the floor. Return to starting position and perform 12 repetitions on each leg. Then move on to exercise A2. To load this exercise, hold a small dumbbell in the same hand as the lifting-leg side.

A2 Glute bridge with groin squeeze

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor, and place a foam roller between your thighs. Tuck in your pelvis to flatten your lower back. Next, press your feet into the floor to lift your hips. Try to form a straight line from your knees to your shoulders. Squeeze the foam roller and hold this position for five seconds. Return to the starting position and complete 15 repetitions. Return to exercise A1 and complete four sets. To load this exercise, hold a dumbbell across your hips.



B1 Standing band abduction

Stand on your left foot with a band placed around your ankles. Stand tall and move your right leg out to the side. Bring it back toward your left leg and complete 20 total repetitions. Keep your body still throughout the movement and don't let your left hip drop out to the side. When you complete 20 repetitions on each side, move onto exercise B2.

B2 Slow mountain climber with band around feet

Go into the top of a pushup, with your hands under your shoulders and a band around your feet. Brace your abs to prevent your lower back from sagging. Next, bring your right knee toward your chest without moving your body. Note that your right leg will be in the air and the band will stretch. Hold this position for five seconds before returning to the starting position. Switch legs and perform 10 repetitions per side. Next, return to exercise B1 and complete four total sets. **R**



Jon-Erik Kawamoto, MSc, CK, CSCS, is a certified kinesiologist, strength and conditioning coach, a regular contributor to Canadian Running and owner of JKC, a small group personal training company in St. John's, N.L. Find out more at jkconditioning.com.

JP Mullenney



WOMEN SET THE PACE®

www.TOwomensruns.com

**SPRING
10K & 5K**

**SATURDAY
MAY 24, 2025**

**SUMMER
10K & 5K**

**SATURDAY
AUG 23, 2025**

**FALL
8K & 5K**

**SATURDAY
OCT 4, 2025**

- **SCENIC** routes
- **EXCLUSIVE** medals and **SWAG** at each race
- **GREAT** post run party
- **VIRTUAL** option available for all races

IN SUPPORT OF:



RIGHT Thomas Fafard races at the Paris Olympics

Threshold Workout

A key to aerobic efficiency

By Thomas Fafard

A threshold workout strikes a balance between intensity and endurance. Unlike the gasping-for-breath sensation you might experience during an all-out 5K effort, for example, threshold workouts should feel “comfortably hard.” This means it’s a challenging pace, but one you can sustain for up to an hour.

The purpose of a threshold workout is to improve your lactate threshold, which is the pace or effort level at which lactate starts to accumulate in the bloodstream faster than your body can clear it. By training at threshold level, athletes can enhance their ability to sustain faster paces for longer periods without accumulating fatigue.

Why threshold training?

The primary goal of threshold training is to build a solid aerobic base without overloading your body with too much high-intensity work. Threshold training also plays a crucial role during the winter months, particularly if you are preparing for a spring race. A 5K race is approximately 94 per cent aerobic, while a marathon is around 99 per cent aerobic, so it’s important to focus on aerobic development. Threshold training helps improve your VO₂ max, which measures the level of oxygen your body can absorb during your more intense runs.

Unlike interval workouts, which can take a toll on your legs and prolong recovery, threshold sessions provide a more sustainable way to improve fitness while reducing injury risk, and all levels of runners can benefit.

I began incorporating threshold workouts last fall to prepare for both the cross-country season and my half-marathon debut in Houston last January. Adding threshold effort in my workouts helped me improve my personal best by a big margin in both the half-marathon and the 5,000m. My objective was to increase my mileage at a moderately intense pace, rather than pushing too hard on the track and risking overtraining. By focusing on these workouts, I could build a higher volume of quality miles at a manageable pace, helping me improve physical and mental endurance while maintaining strength throughout the season.



THE WORKOUT

One of my go-to threshold workouts is four to nine sets of 1.5 km at threshold pace with 90 seconds of jogging rest between intervals. This session provides a great balance of volume and intensity, allowing runners to stay sharp without exhausting themselves. It’s a workout I revisit regularly to maintain my aerobic base during different phases of training.

Tips and tricks

If you’re new to threshold training, consider these adjustments:

1. During threshold training, the heart rate typically falls within 80 to 90 per cent of your maximum heart rate.
2. Use a heart rate monitor, such as a chest strap or arm strap, to obtain more precise data.
3. The perceived effort for this type of training should be between five and seven out of 10 (with 10 being the effort given during a competitive race).

Finally, threshold training plays a crucial role in your development as an athlete, helping you to become faster and more efficient and to improve your endurance. Incorporating these workouts consistently can give you a major edge, whether you’re training for a 5K, the marathon or anything in between. **R**

At Paris 2024, Thomas Fafard became the first Quebecer to compete in the Olympic 5,000m and to reach an Olympic final. He represented Team Canada for the 5K at the 2023 World Road Running Championships in Riga and at the 2024 World Cross Country Championships in Serbia.



Marathon Mind

The Boston Marathon recognizes that, for many runners, the marathon they trained so hard for can become a source of temporary emotional disturbance



At the finish line of a rainy Boston Marathon a few years ago, an agitated and disoriented man in his mid-30s was admitted to the medical tent. He wouldn't make eye contact with anyone, and had trouble recalling basic information, such as his age. He was extremely unhappy with his finishing time, even though he couldn't remember what it was. He periodically lapsed into tears. Medical staff called over one of the psychologists on duty.

Back in 2002, marathon physicians were grappling with the newly-recognized problem of hyponatremia, a serious condition caused by overhydration, which causes swelling in the brain and which, in rare cases, can be fatal. Diagnosing it is tricky, but one of the hallmarks is neurological symptoms, such as disorientation and agitation. The Boston Marathon's medical team decided to tap Jeffrey Brown, a psychologist at nearby Harvard Medical School, to see if psychologists might be able to recognize the warning signs more quickly than the emergency docs who usually staffed the finish line.

More than two decades later, Boston now has a volunteer squad of 60 licensed mental health professionals. They're able to help in cases like the one above, which did, indeed, turn out to be hyponatremia. (The rain had washed away any salt stains on the runner's skin, which might otherwise have revealed if he had unusually salty sweat, which would raise his risk of developing the condition.) But as Brown and his colleagues explain in a recent issue of the journal *Sports Medicine*, the team is also now equipped to address a wide variety of other psychological issues—because for many people, finishing (or *not* finishing) a marathon is a big, emotional deal.

Inside the “marathon mind”

Even before the starting gun fires, there are a lot of factors that might bring mental health issues to the surface for a marathoner. You've been training—and perhaps overtraining—for weeks or months, leaving you in a seemingly permanent state of fatigue. Now you're anxious about executing your race plan and hitting your goals. You probably didn't sleep much the night before the race. You've been sitting on buses and lining up for porta-potties for hours. Then the race starts, and new issues arise: fuelling snafus, pacing errors, unexpected aches and pains. It's a lot.

Inside your brain, a cocktail of mood-changing neurochemicals is sloshing around. There are the familiar ones like endorphins, with their welcome euphoric and painkilling effects, and adrenaline, which puts your body and mind on high alert. But Brown and his colleagues list almost a dozen others, with diverse effects: serotonin, oxytocin, dopamine, BDNF, GABA and so on. Half an hour after a marathon, levels of the stress hormone cortisol are still as high as those measured in people undergoing military interrogation or jumping out of airplanes.

All of these factors can make seemingly small problems balloon into major issues. Another case study in Brown's journal article involved an experienced female runner in her 60s who had fallen late in the race and was taken to the medical tent with bloodied knees and palms. Her anxiety and fear during treatment were out of proportion to her minor injuries, and one of the marathon psychologists was able to help her dial down her arousal levels and understand how the heightened emotions of the day were colouring her feelings.

Finish-line therapy

One of the tools Brown and his colleagues use is a specially-designed questionnaire they call the Marathon Mental State Examination. It begins with basic questions (“What’s your name? Do you know what city you’re in?”) to assess speech and level of consciousness, and proceeds to probe memory, mood, emotion and psychiatric history with running-specific questions (“How did you find the course today? Were there any difficult spots?”).

Members of the psychology team are stationed at the finish line and along the chute that exhausted runners walk through to receive their medals and get food. They’re also located in the medical tents, with one psychologist assigned to each medical unit. In many cases, psych team members can help runners without bringing them to the medical tent. Charity runners, for example, often have deeply personal reasons for participating in the race, and feel overwhelmed at the finish: they might benefit from a reassuring conversation, but can be triaged away from the medical tent.

Getting runners to talk about their feelings isn’t always easy. The psych team is trained to use humour if it seems appropriate: “I thought I smelled burning rubber over here!” is one of their sample icebreakers. More generally, they try to normalize the idea that running a marathon can push your mental and emotional limits as well as your physical ones: “A lot of seasoned runners seem to be feeling a lot of emotions today. What are you feeling right now?”

The takeaway

Anywhere between three and nine per cent of marathon entrants end up in the medical tent, which, for a big race like Boston, can mean thousands of people needing medical attention. As a result, it’s sometimes just as important to quickly determine who *doesn’t* need care. In one case, the psychologist was able to determine that a runner admitted with suspected hyponatremia due to altered mental state was actually fine; he had a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, which explained his unconventional answers in the Marathon Mental State Examination.

How do you avoid ending up in the medical tent yourself? As with the physical challenge of the race, preparing for the mental and emotional challenge is important. Set realistic goals, keep the importance of the race in context and accept that there will be factors (such as the weather) that are outside your control. But the most important takeaway from Brown’s experiences with the Boston psychological response team is that sometimes the marathon really is an overwhelming experience—and if it happens to you, there will be someone to talk to. **R**

Alex Hutchinson is a Toronto journalist specializing in the science of running and other endurance sports, and the author of Endure: Mind, Body, and the Curiously Elastic Limits of Human Performance (now in paperback).



***Receive 10% off registration to the 45th Annual Royal Victoria Marathon
MARATHON / HALF MARATHON / 8K / 5K***

TO CELEBRATE, MARATHON RUNNERS WILL RECEIVE A RUNNING JACKET!



REGISTER AT: WWW.RUNVICTORIAMARATHON.COM
USE CODE: “CDNRUN25” FOR 10% OFF. EXPIRES FEB 28, 2025



The Best-Laid Plans

Can you AI your way to a PB?

By **Andrew McKay**

The promise of AI is tempting: ask a question, get an answer. It seems tailor-made for something like a training plan, but the reality may be a bit more complicated.

How to get the best possible plan

Dr. Stacy Sims, an exercise physiologist and nutrition scientist in New Zealand, wrote a blog post about her experience with using AI tools to craft training regimens.

“ChatGPT is not some super intelligent being,” Sims wrote. “That friendly desktop chatbot is ... pulling data from existing content, including websites, databases, social media and other online content resources.” The reason free online plans are so generic is because they offer a routine that will be useful for the broadest range of people. The trade-off is that the plan is not specific or customized to your unique situation. Therefore it’s critical when forming your AI plan to use the right inputs.

For example, if you’re a 36-year-old woman training for a half-marathon, rather than simply downloading a generic half-marathon training program, you’ll get a better result by asking for a half-marathon plan suitable for a 36-year-old woman. And if you’re a 36-year-old woman who wants to train four times a week, who holds a half-marathon personal best of one hour and 45 minutes but who has a history of tendinitis, you want a plan that takes all of those things into account.

You should also ask for sources, so you know where the information you’re getting is coming from, and whether it’s reliable.

Personalizing a plan

AI doesn’t know how your body feels after a run, how you’re recovering or that your knee starts to hurt after 10 km. It can pull together a tailored plan based on past data, but it can’t replace the intuition and awareness you develop through years of training. You need to be able to evaluate whether what your plan is telling you to do is actually a good idea in your current circumstances.

Of course, this issue isn’t unique to AI; training apps and watches offer workout suggestions that can be equally unrealistic or unattainable. If you can recognize where a training plan does and doesn’t fit your situation, an AI plan may work quite well.

Holding yourself accountable

With a coach or a training group, you have leaders and peers who can guide you and who serve as a sounding board. With an AI-generated training plan, there’s no feedback loop, and no third-party evaluation. It’s incumbent on you to closely monitor your workouts and evaluate your progress.

If you’re highly self-motivated, the structure from an AI plan can give you enough guidance to get you to the finish line.

Does it work?

I used my AI training plan for 13 weeks, with the goal of finishing the Toronto Waterfront Half Marathon in October. It worked pretty well: when I had to switch to the virtual half-marathon at the last minute because of a scheduling conflict, I was confident that, with the work I had done on my own over the summer, I’d be able to run the distance. However, I’ve run many marathons and worked with some great coaches, and I was able to customize and adapt my plan for my personal circumstances, including changing the program on the fly when I needed to.

If you know enough about training to differentiate between the generic building blocks and the elements that are unique to your situation, an AI-generated plan can be useful in giving you a basic structure. If you need feedback and guidance, you’re better off with a coach or experienced running buddy who can see the things you can’t. **R**

Andrew McKay is a Toronto runner and freelance writer.



アシックス

feel comfort **find energy**

Experience energized cushioning.
Move your body, move your mind.

NOVABLAST™ 5

Should You Train When You're Sick?

Sometimes your body will decide for you—but sometimes you need a little guidance

By Lauren Charlton

There's no doubt about it—getting sick in the middle of a training block sucks. You may need to skip training runs, or even your goal race. Only you can decide whether you're too sick to run, but there are some useful guidelines.

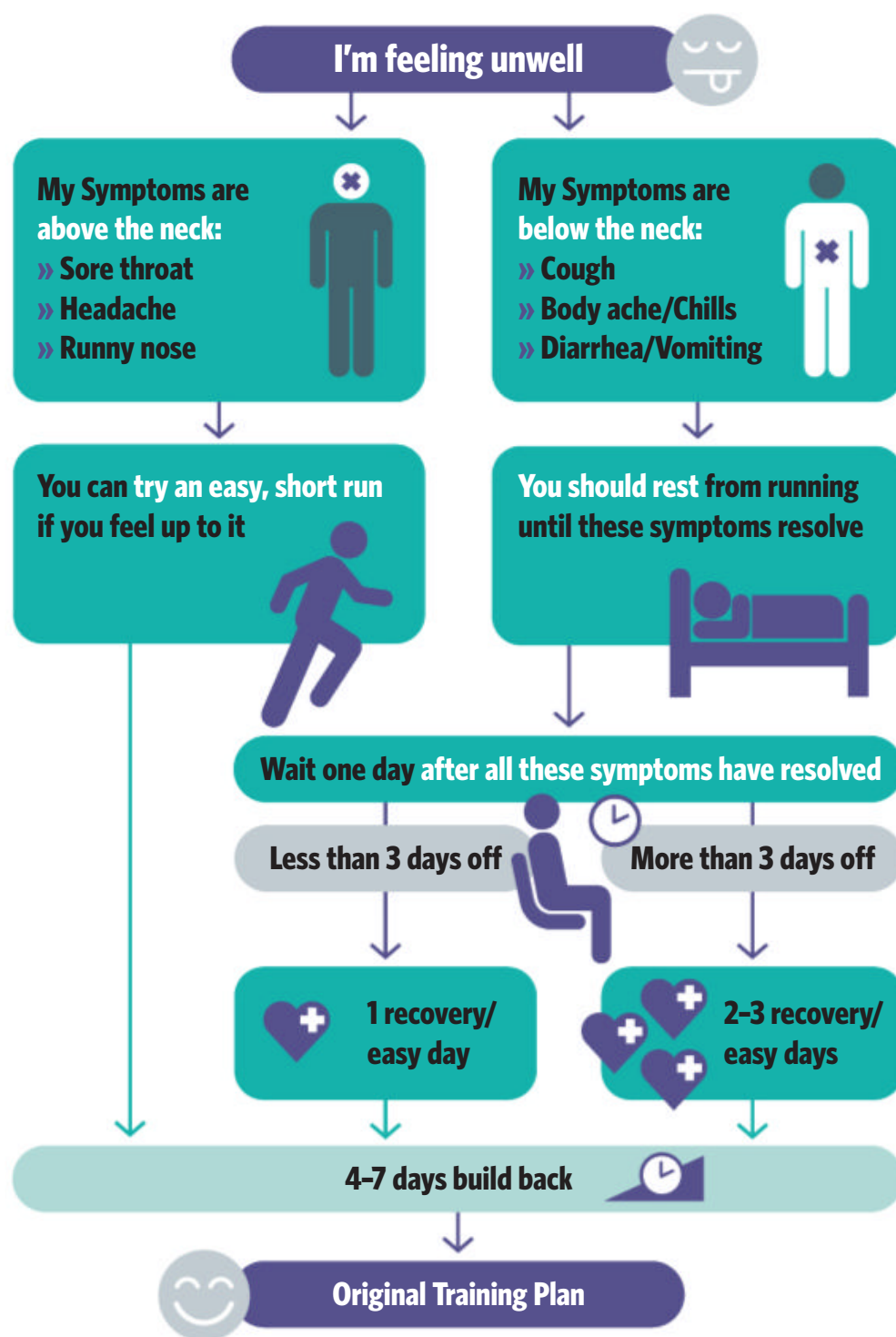
Dr. Rose Zacharias is an emergency medicine physician based in Orillia, Ont. She says it's OK to run if you are in good health overall and you've been running for a while (and you don't feel like you're going to collapse if you start running). An experienced runner who's feeling a bit under the weather could try a shorter, slower run, just to get some miles in, but "if you feel more fatigued or develop more pain and you continue to feel unwell, then it is time to rest," she advises.

Zacharias adds that "new shortness of breath and/or new chest pain, or anything gastrointestinal, is a sign that you should skip the run. And if activity makes you feel worse, then it's best to stop and rest up, or get an expert opinion."

She points out that different illnesses will affect your cardiovascular and metabolic systems differently, and affect your ability to run in different ways. If you've had a fever, it's best to wait at least 24 hours after your symptoms have subsided before you get back to running. Illnesses like COVID or the flu deplete your energy stores more than a simple cold, leave you feeling weaker than normal and may mean you will need more time to recover than you would like. Be prepared for it to take four to seven days (or more) before you can get back to your training plan.

It also depends how important those runs are to your training. The first few runs in base season aren't that critical, and skipping them while you take time to recover from illness are unlikely to affect your training once you resume running. However, being forced to miss a key workout a few weeks out from a race might be more detrimental to your performance, and could result in your having to re-evaluate your goal, possibly switching to a target race that's later in the season.

When you're ready to resume physical activity, it's best to try walking or some gentle yoga before diving back into run training, and when you're ready to run, keep the pace easy and conversational for the first couple of outings. Don't feel bad if you need to take walk breaks. Remember that nutrition is an important part of training; if being sick prevented you from eating normally for a few days, your energy stores will be depleted.



A good rule of thumb is to allow two to three days of easy running for every day you were sick. Pushing too hard too soon could end up setting you back even further. Avoid high-intensity workouts for a couple of weeks, since these could further compromise your immune system.

It can be tempting to push too hard to catch up after taking time off due to illness, but coming back gradually will pay dividends in the long run. **R**

Lauren Charlton is a competitive distance runner and future sports dietitian who's passionate about keeping runners in the sport for the long game.

SALOMON
PRÉSENTE

QC MEGA TRAIL



**QUÉBEC
(CANADA)**



THE NEW
135 KM
ULTRA-TRAIL RACE

13TH EDITION

JULY 3 TO 6 2025



GranCanaria
WORLD
TRAIL
MAJORS

**GET YOUR BIB AT
ULTRATRAILCANADA.COM**

Calgary

It may be the gateway to the Rockies, but it's also a trail-runner's paradise in its own right



Bowmont



Weaselhead, during the 5 Peaks series

DESTINATION
CALGARY,
ALBERTA



Details

TRAVEL Calgary is easily accessible by air, with Calgary International Airport (YYC) the main hub for travellers. All of the trails explored here are within a 30-minute drive of downtown.

LOCAL RACES Every summer, 5 Peaks hosts a series of trail races throughout central Alberta, including three on Calgary trails in Fish Creek Provincial Park, Bowmont Park and Weaselhead Flats. (5peaks.com/central-alberta)

WEBSITE visitcalgary.com



Bowmont

By Steve Edgerton

I owe my love of trail running to the city of Calgary. While due in no small part to its proximity to the Rockies—just a 45-minute drive west—it was in the city itself that I first fell for the sport. Massive expanses of Calgary's river valleys, forested parkland and rolling foothills have been conserved, creating a playground for trail runners that few cities can match.

Even after more than a decade and countless kilometres, I still never tire of my urban trail runs, and I'm still discovering blank spots on my personal trail map that I've yet to explore. Calgary's biggest parks, Fish Creek and Nose Hill (the fifth and sixth largest urban parks in Canada) are the first spots any visiting runner will be directed to. But the options don't end there, and it doesn't take long to understand that Calgary is more than merely a gateway to the Rockies—it's a trail town in its own right.

Below are a few other Calgary parks that continue to fuel my love affair with trail running.

Bowness and Bowmont Parks

Bowness and Bowmont Parks lie adjacent to each other on opposite sides of the Bow River. Each park has its own distinct character, embodied in two of Calgary's most memorable trails.

Along the steep, shaded slopes in the western corner of Bowness Park, you'll find the Wood's Douglas Fir Tree Sanctuary. A short trail zigzags through this stand of towering old-growth trees more reminiscent of Vancouver Island forests than anything else you'll find east of the Rockies. From here, weave through Bowness Park on a web of shale, dirt and paved paths toward Bowmont Park to hit Sideshow Bob. This flowy mountain bike trail, carved into Bowmont's sun-dried south-facing slopes, is just as much fun on two feet as it is on two wheels.

Paskapoo Slopes

The Paskapoo Slopes are a magnificent patch of urban wilderness just 15 minutes from downtown Calgary. The glacially carved slopes are divided into several distinct benches, each separated by steep climbs and bisected by a series of ravines. Featuring 150 metres of gain from bottom to top and dozens of interconnected trails, Paskapoo is the perfect place to accumulate a sneaky amount of vert on nothing but dirt when getting out of town isn't an option.

It's worth noting that trail signage in Paskapoo is extremely limited, so you'll probably want to have a mapping app on your phone to help with navigation.

Weaselhead Flats

Weaselhead Flats is another exceptional Calgary park that feels almost too wild to be within city limits. It encompasses a delta habitat where the Elbow River flows into the Glenmore Reservoir, and is overflowing with birds, beaver, deer and moose. It's not exactly common, but if you're ever going to see a black bear in Calgary, it'll probably be in Weaselhead.

Other than a brief, but steep, climb to get back to the parking lot, the park's trails are very flat, featuring a mix of singletrack, shale and wooden boardwalks traversing forested marshland. **R**

Steve Edgerton is a freelance writer and trail runner based in Calgary.



Skye Half Marathon, Isle of Skye, Scotland

Where the beauty of the scenery makes up for the discomfort on the hills

By Shannon Lough

The Scottish Highlands is known for craggy peaks, lochs, castles and smoky whiskies, all of which can be found on the Isle of Skye. In June, the island hosts an annual half-marathon and 10K event that draws runners from around the world. In 2024, 97 runners from 13 countries participated, including 15 from Canada; the previous year, I was one. Getting to Skye is part of the journey, which for me involved a plane, train, rental car and ferry. The race begins and ends in Portree, the island's vibrant capital.

As a tourist, I wilfully ignored all my pre-race rules, enjoying meals of fish and chips. The 200-year-old city was bustling with travellers and runners collecting their race kits. After claiming mine, I settled into a nearby village called Uig (pronounced *Oo-ig*), where I stayed in a glamping pod (a popular type of accommodation on the island) that reminded me of a Hobbit hole. Down the street, I filled up on scallops and chowder at the Uig Hotel, formerly a coaching inn dating to 1831.

On race-day morning, my romantic vision of a moody and damp Scotland disappeared. It was over 20 C when the skirl of bagpipes called us to the start line in Portree. "Weather on Skye is never ordinary," said race director Fiona Baker, and "don't expect a PB. It's too hilly." While I'd trained for hills on Ontario's Niagara Escarpment, I didn't anticipate the long, gradual slopes on Skye.

We ascended the first hill for nearly 5 km. I huffed and puffed along the course, meeting other travellers and friendly locals, one of whom told me that race conditions were usually 10 C and rainy. The finish line was beyond another hill that

DESTINATION
ISLE OF SKYE,
SCOTLAND



Skye Half Marathon

DATE June 14, 2025

DISTANCES Half-marathon, 10K, 2.7K Fun Run

FEES £39 Half-marathon, £24 10K, £10 Fun Run

PARTICIPANTS 1,000 for half-marathon

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE 8 C to 15 C

TRAVEL Fly into Edinburgh, then take a train and bus to Skye, or rent a car.

WEBSITE [skyehalfmarathon.com](https://www.skyehalfmarathon.com)





stretched from 14 km to 19 km.

The scenery certainly makes the effort worthwhile, with narrow, winding country roads bordered by lush green fields and grazing sheep. The dramatic peaks of the Black Cuillin Mountains layer the landscape, and at the turnaround point, we could admire the sea arm of Loch Snizort. (The race admits a maximum 1,000 runners and usually sells out; with scenery this beautiful, it's no wonder.)

Due to its remote location, with a scattering of villages surrounded by nature, the race commits to a sustainable, socially-minded model. Proceeds from the race go to local organizations and charities that improve islanders' lives, and which, in turn, provide race volunteers. Participants can offset their carbon footprint by donating a small sum to plant a tree in the Cairngorms (in Scotland's eastern highlands) as part of a re-wilding project.

Over the next two days, with sore legs, I toured the rest of the island, hiking an hour to see the rocky spires of Old Man of Storr and wandering the gardens of Dunvegan Castle before taking a plunge in the ocean at Coral Beach. Due to the lack of rain that year, I decided to skip the Fairy Pools and waterfalls, saving them for a future visit, when, hopefully, the isle is more misty. **R**

Shannon Lough is a writer and yoga instructor based on Ontario's Lake Huron coast. Her long-term running habit has taken her up mountains, along rivers and across islands.



GOALS, GOALS, GOALS

HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT FOR YOUR RUNNING LIFE IN 2025 (NO MATTER HOW 2024 WENT)

By Molly Hurford

When we talk about goal-setting, we often talk about it

as though it's the first time we've ever sat down and set a resolution, signed up for a race or decided to make a big change in our lives. But the reality is that roughly 34 per cent of us set resolutions on an annual basis, and 92 per cent of us don't actually hit those resolutions. Even Olympic gold medallists will tell you their track record for hitting their goals is quite low. So, how do you set a goal when you didn't hit your goal last year, or if you've never managed to make a resolution stick? And—if you are one of the lucky few who did crush their resolution—how do you goal-set when you have already won?

IF YOU ACHIEVED YOUR GOAL

You might be surprised how fraught blowing past your goal can be. You ran your first marathon. Or you set a PB in your 5K. Or managed a full month's run streak in 2024. You did the thing, and—now what? Because running offers a literal finish line for your goal, it's easy to become demotivated once you achieve it. There's a reason that less than 13 per cent of DI collegiate runners in the NCAA keep running after college, even if they loved the training and enjoyed running at the time. Olympians have opened up in recent years about the post-Olympic blues—a period of depression that's common for athletes who've competed at the Games, hit their goal and don't have a plan for what's next. If you did hit your goal in 2024, here's how to stay on track for 2025.

REFLECT ON YOUR ACHIEVEMENT

First, pop that champagne or toast yourself with a mocktail and celebrate what you did. But before setting a new goal, Hoar recommends doing some self-reflection. "Ask yourself what was accomplished in the past season; what did you learn, where did you grow, and what can be improved for next season?" she says. Even if you achieved your goal, your growth in the sport isn't going to be linear. Where did you struggle? What was challenging? Reflecting on what didn't go perfectly is helpful and necessary to grow in sport, and it's just as important as celebrating the wins and the growth that you did have this season.

HOW DO YOU DEFINE SUCCESS?

"Everyone has a different purpose for their sport participation, and everyone has a different motivation toward achievement," Hoar says. "What does growth in running look like for you? It could be going faster, longer or better, or it could be something even more profound on your path to growth. Look at last year's success as a point on your growth trajectory, rather than an ending and a new beginning. If running is your passion, what would best allow you to represent your passion? Is it doing multiple races in

"What does growth
in running look like
for you?"



one year? Or doing one big race and going for a certain time? Or is it even more community-minded, like helping coach a group of young runners? Success can look like many different things.”

GOING BIGGER? FIRST, CHECK IN

When we hit our goal, the temptation is to go bigger/better/faster next time. Ultrarunners joke about 200 (miles or kilometres) being the new 100, but they’re only half-kidding. Once you do a 5K, people assume you’ll move up to a 10K, then a half-marathon, then a marathon, and so on. But you don’t need to continually make your goals bigger.

“From one race to another, you’re in a different body, you have a different mindset, you have a different set of experiences and wisdom from past races and your life may be in a different place,” says Hoar. It’s important to look at all the facets of your life as you think about setting your next running goal, because, as Hoar says, “stress is stress.” So if this is the year you’re becoming a new parent, starting a graduate degree or taking on a new role at work, it may not be the time to double your race distance, regardless of how amazingly well you did last year.

CAN YOU SET A GOAL YOU MAY NOT GET?

Consider this challenge for 2025: is there a goal you’re unsure you can achieve? If you’re someone who always hits their goals, it could be that, out of a fear of failure, you’re not setting goals that stretch you far enough. But consider this: what if failure is the goal? “If you can accept a range of results, then all of a sudden you can actually focus on what you’re there to do, which is just to race as well as you can in that moment,” says Canadian middle-distance track Olympian Erin Teschuk. “If you can’t accept that you might not achieve your goals, you’re going to struggle in running, because if you’re achieving all of them, you’re not setting expansive enough goals.”



“I have goals, but I hold on to them loosely, and focus on the things that are within my control”

IF YOU'VE NEVER SET A RUNNING GOAL

If you're new to running, or you've been running for a while but have never set a running-specific goal for the year, consider this your test year. Setting a run goal for the first time can be daunting, since it's hard to know what's going to be too easy, too hard, too specific or too wishy-washy. Here's how to approach your first goal—and how to recalibrate along the way.

SET A GOAL, EVEN IF YOU'RE UNSURE

Remember, you can always change or shift your goal later in the year if you reach it early or if you realize you've bitten off more than you can chew. The important thing is to give yourself some kind of goal for the season, whether it's running your first 5K or running a certain number of kilometres every week. “Setting goals can be really beneficial if you need that motivation to get out of bed in the morning and do your training,” says Teschuk. “It's like your lighthouse or your guiding light. I know I'm at my best when I'm more engaged in the daily process, when I know how I want to be showing up each day to my workouts.”

AIM FOR A SMALL INCREASE

When it comes to picking a goal, Hoar suggests looking for the right balance of achievable and challenging. Too easy, and your goal won't motivate you to actually do your training or push to make improvements. Too hard, and you may end up demotivated, because it feels impossible. The optimal goal is between two and five per cent harder than where you are now, she says. “We want to set a goal that still feels safe, so the brain doesn't freak out and try to protect you from risk, but we also want to stretch,” she explains. “So I ask clients what “normal” looks like for them now, and what goal would bump them slightly over that range.”

AND DON'T GET TOO PRECIOUS ABOUT IT

While setting stretch goals is great, it's also important not to let one bad workout or race dampen your love of the run. “If I get over-fixated on things like times and results, it demotivates me,” says Teschuk. “I've realized I can care about my times and results, but if I get too specific, I won't perform to the best of my abilities.”

GET CLEAR ON WHAT YOU CAN AND CAN'T CONTROL

Try to set at least some goals that feel entirely within your control. These tend to be process-based goals, like committing to running four days a week or strength training once a week. Race goals often include elements that are outside of our control; your race finish time can be impacted by the weather or an urgent need to hit the porta potty mid-race; if you have your sights set on a podium finish, that's even more outside your control, since you don't dictate who else is on the start line. “I have goals, but I hold on to them loosely, and focus on the things that are within my control,” says Teschuk. “And focusing on them is going to increase the chances you reach those uncontrollable goals.”

EXPECT TO LEARN A LOT

Finally, if you've never set a running goal or participated in a race, plan for 2025 to be a year of huge growth and learning. “You will be learning on the fly,” Hoar says. “You will be receiving so much information, and you will have to decide what to do with that information as you run. Everyone will have their own journey in that learning. No matter how many articles we write or how many podcasts we do on the topic, until someone goes through the race, they won't truly learn.” This first goal is going to help you calibrate your future goals—and don't be afraid to tweak them mid-season with the information you've compiled. If you can lean into curiosity, you're going to have a successful year.

IF YOU MISSED YOUR GOAL LAST YEAR

In an Olympic year, we hear a lot about those athletes who made their dreams happen, who made it to the Olympics, who made the final or won a medal. But for every athlete who headed to Paris, there were dozens of professional runners who dedicated the last four years to making the team, only to be left at home. If you think your lack of a marathon PB this year was tough, imagine how it feels to be at the Olympic Trials and come up short. Here's what you can take into next year.

TAKE TIME TO MOURN YOUR GOAL

Before you can start planning for next season, it's important to truly close out this latest chapter of your running life by letting yourself feel sad about not hitting your goal. "There is grief, because that goal was important to you," says Sharleen Hoar, mental performance lead at the Canadian Sport Institute. "We wouldn't be emotional about anything unless it was important to us. When we fail to meet an important goal, we suffer. And a lot of people feel really uncomfortable with that emotion and want to skip over it. But the problem is that if we don't let ourselves take that time to process those feelings, that negative emotion becomes embedded in our memory, and then we're more likely to avoid having that feeling again in the future, which doesn't mean performing well and hitting your goals—it means you could stop setting goals altogether."

ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR EFFORT

As you navigate the complex emotions around not reaching your goal, Canadian 5,000m Olympian Julie-Anne Staehli says it's also important to be proud that you had a goal so audacious that there was a risk of failure. "When you don't make the Olympic team, you almost wish you didn't have goals this big," she says. "But this year, when I was disappointed that I didn't make it, my trainer said to me, 'How cool is it that you're disappointed you're not on the Olympic team?' And that reminded me of how far I have come. To do this sport, you're putting yourself on the line. You fought every day. And you should be proud of your effort, regardless of the result."

WHAT CAN YOU CELEBRATE?

"In endurance sports, if we're not finding little wins, and we wait for the finish line to get the big win, we haven't fuelled our brain to stay connected to the race that we want," says Hoar. "If we don't see pieces of appreciation or gratitude, there's no dopamine or serotonin flowing to our brains, and we need that in order to stay engaged and satisfied." So, what little wins can you celebrate from the past season? Maybe you finally nailed a month of consistent training. (That's a win.) Maybe you got a Strava segment, or became a local legend. (Also a win.) Write out some of the season's tiny moments that you can celebrate. Then, look ahead. Make a list of little wins and how you'll celebrate them in the next season, so you aren't focusing all of your energy on one single race day.

LIST WHAT YOU LEARNED

Running a marathon isn't about the day of the race, it's about the weeks and months before the race, the early-morning runs, the protein smoothies, the stretching and the mile repeats and the black toenails. And even if you didn't get your goal, you likely learned a lot along the way—that's how track Olympian and author of *Sprinting Through Setbacks* Micha Powell felt when she missed making the team for the 400m this year. "List all of the things you learned during the season, and how you can apply them to your next goal," she suggests. Hoar adds that when doing this, make sure to include the positives *and* the negatives, like how you nailed your pre-race fuelling strategy, but how your right big toe blistered at kilometre eight of the marathon and throbbed until kilometre 32, when you dropped out.

CONSIDER THIS YOUR PERMISSION TO SET A NEW GOAL

The problem with not getting a goal—whether it was a DNF (Did Not Finish) result in an ultramarathon or not making the Olympic team or not hitting that personal best in your 10K—is that the assumption is you'll try again. (You know the old chestnut, "If at first you don't succeed...") But that's flawed thinking, especially for athletes who aren't running for a paycheck, who are just out there running for personal satisfaction. There's no law that says if you didn't finish that 100K race this year, you have to go back to that same start line in 2025. It's OK to leave a goal in the past, whether you got it or not, says Hoar. Maybe you realized you don't enjoy training for long races, and you actually love the rush of a 5K, and that's OK. Let it go.

PLAN YOUR REVENGE TOUR

Every great story requires conflict, so consider 2024 your low point and your chance for a do-over. (Cue *Rocky* theme.) Whether you're going to tackle the same event or set a new goal, look at 2025 as your comeback year, your revenge tour, your "bet on yourself" era. When Powell didn't make the Olympic team, she shifted focus to the World Athletics Championships in 2025 and what she would need to do to get there. "I know that I need to run 51-flat or better in the 400, because that's the time that made it into the semi-finals of the Olympic Games," she says. "So that's my goal. And I know that to do that, I need to run at really high-quality races, big meets where girls are regularly running under that. And I know I need to call my shot, to let people know that this is the next goal. That's the energy I want to bring next year: *Watch me.*" **R**

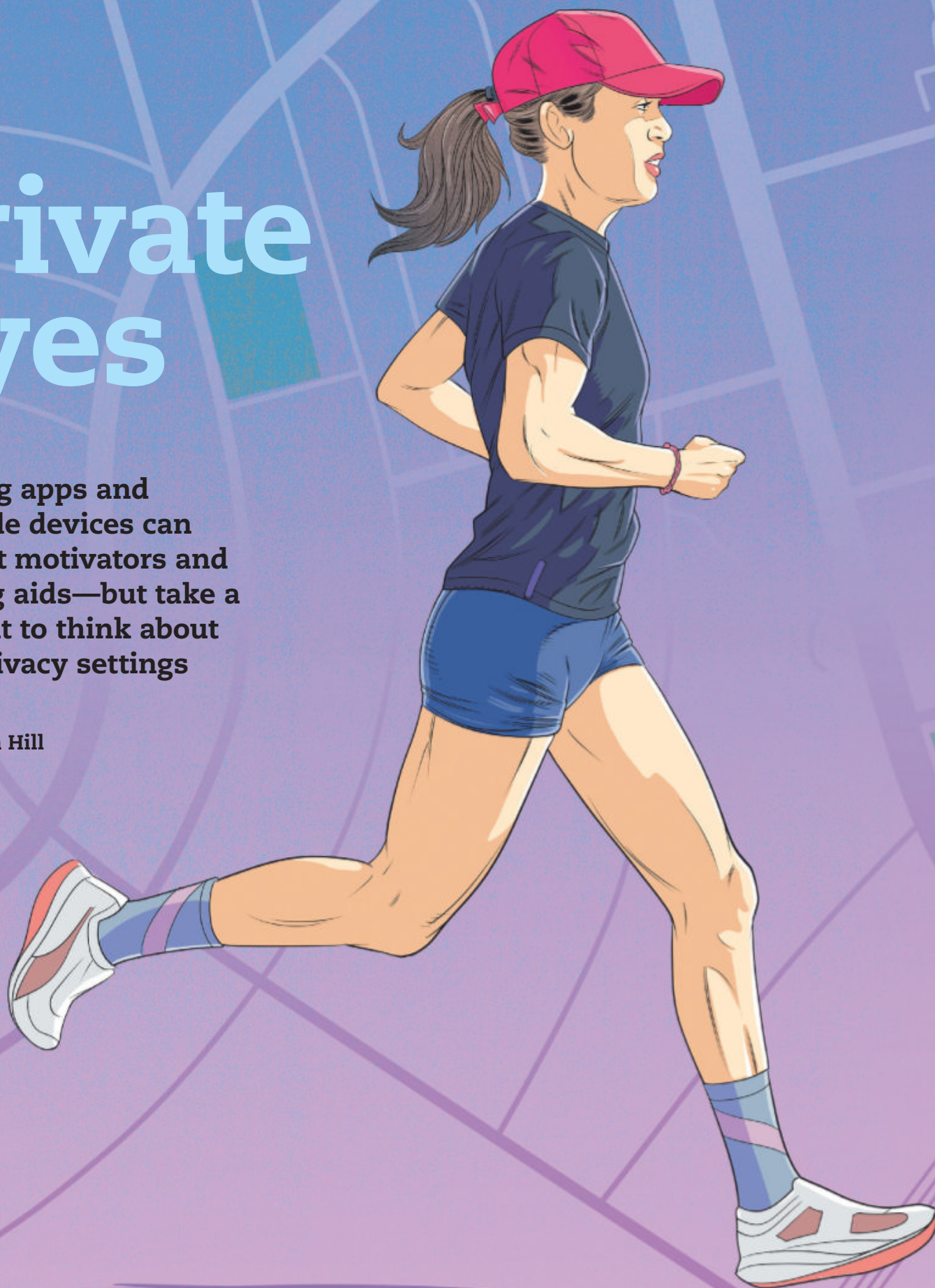
Molly Hurford is a fitness and nutrition writer, ultrarunner, author and founder of Strong Girl Publishing. She lives and trains in Collingwood, Ont.

Maybe you realized
you don't enjoy
training for long races,
and you actually
love the rush of a 5K.
That's OK.

Private Eyes

Running apps and wearable devices can be great motivators and training aids—but take a moment to think about your privacy settings

By Andrea Hill



For most of her life, Natalie Morrill has been a data-free runner.

The Ottawa-based writer and runner would judge workouts by effort (not pace) and plot distances for intervals on Google Maps before lacing up and heading out the door. But as fitness apps and running watches became more popular, she decided to see what all the hype was about and, three years ago, signed up for Strava, where she started uploading runs she recorded on her phone. “It would show me if I had slowed down over the course of a run or how it compared to the last time I did a route. And I found that quite motivating,” Morrill says.

But as much as she enjoyed the feedback, she also found Strava unsettling. One of the first things Morrill did after joining was follow people she knew—and she quickly became troubled by how much information she could see about their activities. She adjusted her privacy settings so no one could see data from her own runs.

“Because my running had always been private, it felt a little exposed to be like, here’s all the details,” Morrill recalls. “I typically run in similar places, and they’re usually near my house. I didn’t know how I felt about that being extremely visible on a social media platform.”

With more than 120 million users, Strava is the world’s largest social networking platform for athletes, and running is now the most-uploaded activity on the app, with users either tracking activities directly or sharing data collected by wearable fitness trackers, such as running watches. The company prides itself on connecting millions of active people, and its own research suggests more than three quarters of its Gen Z users feel more connected to others when seeing their friends’ and family members’ activities on Strava (no data was made available for other demographics). But to become part of that digital community, many of Strava’s users share location information and other sensitive details about their workouts, bringing up privacy and security issues.

Despite its commitment to taking its users’ privacy seriously, Strava has publicly struggled with privacy hurdles in the past. In 2018, both Strava and Finnish-based fitness company Polar found themselves in the spotlight after it was discovered that their public heatmaps gave away locations of covert and non-declared military bases. (Strava responded by pledging to simplify its privacy features and inform users about how to control their data.) And before the 2022 Boston Marathon, American marathoner Molly Seidel—best known for her bronze-medal performance at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics—told reporters she had taken a break from posting publicly on Strava after experiencing privacy concerns, including people figuring out where she lived and showing up to her runs. (Strava’s response: “We care deeply about athlete safety and fully support athletes using privacy and map visibility controls to customize how they share information and tell their story.”) To its credit, Strava recently beefed up its privacy policy by implementing stricter controls on data sharing through its application programming interface (API), limiting third-party apps’ access to user data. This will ultimately give more transparency around where Strava user information is displayed.

Data, data everywhere

When someone 18 or older joins Strava, all profile information and activities are, by default, set to be viewable by everyone, which means the information can be seen on the app and in search engine results. These settings are customizable and users can opt to make all their activities private, hide start and end points and hide specific addresses, such as home or workplaces (though some research suggests hiding parts of activities may not be enough to obscure an address, particularly if a user lives in a remote or sparsely populated area).

Ritesh Kotak, a cybersecurity technology analyst based in Toronto, recommends reading privacy policies and understanding what you’re

opting into before agreeing to terms and conditions, not just on social networking apps like Strava, but for all fitness apps and wearable devices. For fitness apps and devices to be able to provide the insights users find so valuable, they collect huge swaths of data on users, including exercise and sleep habits, location, email address, contacts and—in some cases—payment information.

“Just imagine the data that you’re collecting being sent to your insurance company. And them being able to assess risk from an actuarial standpoint that oh, you’re not sleeping enough, you’re not exercising enough, therefore you’re at a higher risk of A, B and C and we’re going to increase your premiums,” Kotak warns.

Even though many fitness apps are thought of as health apps, the data they collect isn’t considered health information under health information protection laws, which means fitness apps don’t need to abide by the strict rules that govern health-care organizations and providers. That’s why data collected on fitness apps can be used in ways users don’t expect—for example, by being shared with third parties to provide targeted advertising.

Kotak doesn’t use fitness apps himself, but tells those who do to go with reputable companies that have robust privacy policies, read those privacy policies carefully before consenting and check default settings (which are often the most open option). Some of the questions he likes to consider when scanning privacy policies include: what types of data are being collected? How, where and for how long is it being stored? Can you request your data be erased? And is your data being sold to third parties?

This type of diligence is recommended for all apps, including non-fitness-related social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, where runners often congregate. (Conversations around privacy and TikTok, which is owned by Chinese-based ByteDance, have been particularly fraught in recent years, with concerns that the Chinese government could access user data through the app. Last

The data collected by fitness apps isn’t considered health information, so they don’t need to abide by the strict rules that govern health-care providers



year the Canadian government ordered the dissolution of TikTok’s Canadian offices after a months-long national security review, but didn’t go so far as to ban use of the app in the country. South of the border, the U.S. has threatened to ban TikTok within its borders if ByteDance does not sell the app by early 2025.)

If you feel like you need to be a lawyer to understand privacy policies, you’re not alone. Canada doesn’t have plain-language privacy laws, and Kotak says language in these policies can sometimes seem like it was purposely written to confuse. He encourages people to search for information about an app’s privacy record online. Many product review sites break down privacy regulations in easy-to-understand language, and organizations like the non-profit Mozilla Foundation specifically report on the privacy and security of consumer technology.

If you Google an app or wearable device before accepting its privacy policy, you’re likely to learn whether the company has experienced a data compromise and how they handled it. Issues such as criminal hacks and unintended sharing of sensitive user information can affect fitness apps of all sizes—Fitbit, MyFitnessPal, Garmin and Peloton are among the big players that have been targeted by

cyberattacks in the last decade—but larger companies have more resources to respond to such attacks and more to lose if they don't take things seriously. Garmin, for instance, is believed to have paid millions of dollars after a ransomware attack in 2020 shut down its entire system, including its Garmin Connect app, for four days—an option that may not have been available for a smaller startup. (Garmin says no customer data was accessed, lost, or stolen in the attack). “The overriding thing here is that fitness is health,” Kotak cautions, “and if you are going to give someone your health-related information, do your due diligence and don't go with the lowest bidder.”

For her part, Morrill picked up her first running watch—a Coros—two years ago and loves having access to her running data on the company's app. Despite her concerns about sharing workouts publicly on Strava, she admits she didn't have the same worries about sharing her data with Coros and didn't dive into the Coros privacy policy before accepting the terms and conditions. “I probably haven't thought about it as much as I ought to,” she says. “There's a lot of biometric data being stored by Coros, and I hope they're a trustworthy company, but—and I don't know if it's just data exhaustion from the world we live in—it is out there. There's a lot of stuff about me that exists anyway. I don't think I've worried about it too much.”

“I want people to learn”

For Canadian marathon record holder and two-time Olympian Natasha Wodak, the public nature of Strava is one of the things she loves about it. She's been on the app since 2017 and logs all her activities—highs, lows, cross training and all—on a public profile.

“Sometimes the general public of runners, they look at elites and sort of put us on a pedestal,” Wodak says. “[They think] we're so fast, and we must nail every workout. But we're all the same. We all have runs that are really hard. We all have workouts that suck. We have

If you feel like you need to be a lawyer to understand privacy policies, you're not alone



workouts where we almost poop our pants. And so I feel like it's important to put that out there. And when you're vulnerable, that's how you inspire. That's how people relate to you. I also think it's important to share the mistakes that I've made and workouts that I've done. I want people to learn.”

She knows her followers can probably figure out where she lives by looking at her workout maps, but she points out that anyone motivated to get that information could also work it out in other ways, including by studying her Instagram posts. “If people wanted a way to find me, they probably could, whether I'm on Strava or not,” she says. “You can't run scared. I just try to trust that people that follow me are not going to try to stalk me.”

Amber Rollack, a runner and physiotherapist in Saskatoon, agrees with Wodak that information shared publicly on Strava can be a great educational tool for runners. She signed up for the app about six years ago and has always shared her activities on a public profile. “It doesn't bother me to share that information, because I feel like I'm sharing it within a community of other like-minded people,” she says. “I'm constantly sharing personal experiences with clients, because I'm always trying to connect with people and build that rapport, and I

guess I just never felt that private about my life.”

Many of Rollack's clients are runners, and, while she never tells them to sign up for Strava, many already have public accounts (or accounts they've allowed her to follow). It means she can pull up rich data on a runner's recent activities while they're in her office trying to understand what caused an injury. She can see if athletes suddenly increased their mileage, if they're pushing the pace on easy runs and if they have an atypical stride pattern that may be exacerbating an injury. “If you can start to highlight these errors, then they'll be able to see how they can correct it, by continuing to look at the data themselves,” she says. And if her clients know their physiotherapist is following their activities on Strava, they may make more effort to follow her advice.

Strava or it didn't happen

While Wodak and Rollack enjoy making all their workouts public on Strava, both acknowledge that public profiles might not be the best option for everyone; some people might feel the need to “perform” if their runs are public, or get caught up in competing with followers to the detriment of their own training needs.

“As an elite runner and someone who is very seasoned, I'm very confident,” Wodak says. “And so, for me, I have no issues being on Strava and showing that I run easy. But I think for certain individuals, it can be very hard with the comparison game. And it can lead to people wanting to run all their easy runs hard and things like that.”

It's something Seidel acknowledged in 2022 when she announced she was changing her relationship with Strava. “Strava is a really cool app I've loved using, but it can oftentimes glamourize overtraining, become overly competitive, or even lead to safety issues,” she posted on Instagram. “I'm hoping that, together, we can start finding new creative ways to make it more inclusive and safer for everyone

Wodak points out that anyone motivated to get her workout maps could work it out by studying her Instagram posts



who uses it.” Many who commented below her post shared similar thoughts. “I don't use Strava for those exact reasons you listed. I wish I was confident enough to share my really easy run paces, but I still feel a bit embarrassed about them, so I just don't share at all,” one commenter wrote.

Morrill sometimes feels “a little bit sheepish” about following other runners on Strava without sharing information publicly herself, but she'll take the sheepishness over the discomfort she would feel by having an open profile. And while her tight privacy settings mean she can't take advantage of all the app's functions (she doesn't show up on segment leaderboards, for instance) she thinks she's struck a good balance between getting feedback that helps her train while not feeling overexposed.

That balance will look different for everyone based on their own risk-benefit analysis, but the best privacy settings will be ones set intentionally—even if that means taking time to do your homework. “You may not think about it now,” Kotak says, “but you'll think about it when your data is out there in cyberspace for all to see.” **R**

Andrea Hill is a marathon runner who works for Postmedia News in Ottawa.



Golden



RIGHT Aaron Brown, Jerome Blake, Brendon Rodney, Andre De Grasse are golden in Paris

Nick Iwanyshyn

shoe



Awards



Performance of the Year

Team Canada Men's 4x100m Relay Gold Medal, Paris 2024

Aaron Brown, Jerome Blake, Brendon Rodney, Andre De Grasse

It was a gold medal 28 years in the making, and a long-awaited Olympic triumph for the Canadian quartet of Aaron Brown, Jerome Blake, Brendon Rodney and Andre De Grasse. These four athletes had been working together for five years, leading up to this golden moment on a rainy night at Paris's Stade de France. As one of the slowest qualifying teams in the final and relegated to an outside lane, Canada defied the odds, fending off South Africa and Great Britain on the anchor leg to claim gold in a season's best time of 37.50 seconds. This unforgettable performance is etched in Canadian history and earns our Performance of the Year award for 2024.

Despite the squad's success at the 2022 World Championships in Eugene, Ore. (where they won gold) and medals at the previous two Olympic Games, pundits didn't predict the Canadian men would podium in Paris. De Grasse and Brown had both struggled with their form, admitting they entered the Games feeling less than 100 per cent, and Blake's spot on the team was debated after other Canadian sprinters showed faster times.

"I never stopped believing," Brown told *Canadian Running* post-race. "These guys can do incredible things when we get together and put our minds to it, and it showed today. Never count us out, no matter what lane ... We can be in lane 2, we can be in lane 9, we could be in the stands—we can make magic together anywhere."

Lane 9 is seen as a disadvantage due to its forward position on the track, where runners can't see their competitors. However, Rodney said it was an asset. "Lane 9 was the perfect lane for us," he said. "We didn't have to worry about anybody, we just had to run our race."

A fumbled first exchange between Americans Christian Coleman and Kenny Bednarek gave Canada an opening. Approaching the final 100m, De Grasse powered ahead, securing Canada's first Olympic gold medal in the relay since the iconic 1996 team of Donovan Bailey, Bruny Surin, Glenroy Gilbert and Robert Esmie won in Atlanta.

This Olympic gold completed the medal set for Brown, Rodney and De Grasse, who have competed together since winning bronze in Rio in 2016. "Bronze in Rio, silver in Tokyo—this is the icing on the cake. We have our gold," said De Grasse, reflecting on their journey to the top of the podium.—*Marley Dickinson*

Rising Star

Audrey Leduc

Until 2024, Audrey Leduc was a promising young 100m and 200m athlete. In 2024, her trajectory transformed her from promising to world class.

At the LSU Alumni Gold meet in Baton Rouge, La., last April, the 25-year-old sprinter from Gatineau, Que., lowered her personal best by nearly half a second (a small lifetime over 100m)—from 11.38 to 10.96. Not only was this a massive personal best, but it also beat one of the longest-standing marks on the Canadian records list—Angela Bailey's 100m national record, which had stood since 1987.

Leduc would go on to lower her own national record again in 2024, during the toughest competition of her life so far—the Olympics.

Leduc, who attended Université Laval, studied business while pursuing her athletic goals. It was there that she met her coach, Fabrice Akue, with whom she stills trains. Leduc's progress may seem sudden, but when you look at her consistent results from the last five seasons, it's obvious a breakthrough was imminent.

The first clear indication she was ready for the world's biggest stage came in March 2024, when she qualified for and competed at the World Indoor Championships in Glasgow. That was her first senior national team. She rose to the occasion, running a personal best in the 60m and advancing to the semi-final, where she finished sixth.

From there, it was only a matter of weeks until she set the first of three Canadian records in the 2024 season.





Leduc's 200m results are just as staggering. The second national record she set in 2024 (a 22.36 from an Atlanta meet in May) was more than a second faster than her best mark one year earlier. Her combined results over the 100m and 200m made her a threat heading into the Paris Olympics, despite the Games marking only her second senior national team.

At Paris, Leduc competed in three events: the 100m, 200m and 4x100m relay. As long as she kept advancing, that meant eight rounds of competition over eight days, not to mention the potential addition of repechage rounds in the 200m. For an athlete who's relatively untested on the world stage, this is a huge ask. Yet, Leduc delivered.

She would advance to the semi-final in both of her individual events, running a personal best and new national record of 10.95 in the 100m semi-final. She also advanced to the 200m semi-final before securing a place in the final, and a third national record with her Canadian 4x100m team. Before the Games, she told CBC, "When we combine that 60 metres, that two-tenths faster, plus my strength, my top speed, I'm just naturally going to be faster in the 100 and the 200."

Truer words have never been spoken. Leduc's 2024 season and first Games will go down as one of the most impressive of any Canadian track and field athlete, to be rivalled only by athletes like Andre De Grasse and Mohammed Ahmed. We look forward to much more from this exceptionally talented athlete.—*Madeleine Kelly*



LEFT AND RIGHT
Audrey Leduc in Paris

Trail Performances of the Year

Becky Bates at Hardrock 100

With her jaw-dropping top-seven finish at the 2024 Hardrock Hundred Mile Endurance Race, Becky Bates proved her talent for breaking records outshines her ability to break old habits.

An accomplished ultrarunner from Kimberley, B.C., who only got into the sport in her early 50s, Bates can't seem to cross the finish line of the famed ultra-trail race in Colorado's San Juan Mountains without setting an all-time best for her age group.

She did it at her first Hardrock in 2017 at age 55, running 32:46:17 for the women's 50–59 age group record. In 2023 (her second Hardrock outing) she set the women's 60–69 age group record, in 36:15:58. And this past July, at age 62, Bates not only shaved more than 15 minutes off her own age-group record, but also finished as the top Canadian; she was seventh in the women's race.

The race direction alternates each year, and this was Bates's first time running the course clockwise, which meant tackling descents early.

"One of my biggest worries going into the race was running 18 km on a net downhill in the first 50 miles—that's a great way to destroy your quads," says Bates. "But at some point, I looked around and thought, Oh shit! I'm 62, and I can still stand up and run these descents! I can still surprise myself."

Unfortunately for Bates, an even bigger surprise was waiting on a climb between the Chapman Gulch aid station and Oscar's Pass, about a fifth of the way into the 102.5-mile race. "I got swarmed by black flies," she recounts. "They were biting me, and it was horrible. Every time a bite would happen, my heart rate would go up. It also affected my eating and drinking, because I was just so focused on getting these bugs off me."

Suspecting her sunscreen was attracting the insects, she scoured her skin with alcohol wipes offered by a fellow runner, and pressed on.

Bates wasn't aware during the race of how she was performing compared to the rest of the field. "This year I didn't really want to know," she says. "I kind of like the surprise. I don't think I could ever say that I'm going for a time goal."

But she concedes a time check in the race's homestretch likely would have helped her crack 36 hours. "My pacer, Pascal [Gray] said to me, 'Do you want to know what the time is?' and I said No! I have no desire to know where I'm at, because I think I'm giving you all I've got. Had I asked for the time from Pascal, I think I would have been able to rally, to go a little bit faster."

Completing the race in 36 hours and 26 seconds, Bates says she's very pleased to have placed where she did.

"Obviously I can't compete with [women's course record holder and three-time Hardrock champion] Courtney [Dauwalter] and the pros, but I really did push it at the back end, so I'm super happy to be where I am."—Paul Baswick

Becky Bates at
Hardrock 100

Howie Stern

Emilie Mann at Run Rabbit Run 100-Mile

She feared a headlamp mishap would leave her fumbling in the dark, but in the end, Emilie Mann outshone them all.

In her brilliant performance at 2024's Run Rabbit Run in Steamboat Springs, Colo., the 31-year-old Fernie, B.C., native not only blazed her way to the top of the women's podium in her first 100-mile finish, but also shattered the women's course record (held by Colorado's Michele Yates since 2013) by more than 27 minutes.

"I definitely surprised myself," Mann says of her 19:48:05 finish at the mid-September ultra. "I was hoping to do well if I did finish, but I really didn't know things would turn out as great as they did."

Despite her solid ultra-trail credentials—including winning the Golden Ultra 60K distance and Squamish 50-miler in B.C. and setting a women's course record at Alberta's Sinister 7 50K, all in 2023—Mann says she approached Run Rabbit Run with some trepidation. "I was going into this race very new to the longer distances," she says. "After racing a lot of the shorter distances like the 50K and the 50 mile, I was like, 'You know what? I think I'm going to step way out of my comfort zone and see what happens with the 100 mile.'"



Emilie Mann at Run Rabbit Run 100-Mile 2024

Mike McMonagle



Her respect for the distance informed her pacing at Run Rabbit Run early in the race. "I set out pretty cautiously," she said. "I felt strong, though, and it felt good just to keep feeling good for pretty much the entire race."

The pitfalls of loitering at aid stations also figured into Mann's race strategy. "I had been warned a lot about getting cold, so my goal was to spend very little time in aid stations, to not let my core temperature drop." As a result, her early rest stops may have been a bit too brief—she hastily darted off from one aid station in mismatched shoes—but her plan to keep moving did its job in keeping out the cold.

Of even greater concern than losing heat was losing light. "I had so many extra batteries for my headlamp," she says. "There was no way I was going to run in the dark! I was terrified of that happening."

While a little preparedness helped her fend off her most anticipated threats, the biggest obstacle Mann encountered was one she hadn't expected. "At around 30 kilometres left in the race, I had some GI issues, and I got sick. That really caught me off guard—I didn't feel it coming. But then, after taking an hour off of eating or drinking anything, my stomach actually settled, and I was able to get more nutrition in, and finished it off."

Mann says pulling off her historic feat at Run Rabbit Run "definitely wasn't easy," but "accomplishing it is such a reminder not to set those hard limits in your mind of what you're capable of and what you're good at, or what distance is good for you. There's always something to be said for stepping outside your comfort zone and seeing what is possible."—Paul Baswick



Community Builder of the Year

Colin Taillefer of Montreal

Colin Taillefer didn't grow up running, and that may be why he became so committed to the idea of fostering community in his running life: he remembers how challenging it can be to find one's place in the running world.

While studying at the University of British Columbia, he volunteered for a run clinic in Vancouver, even though he had never run before. They let him lead a walking clinic in Pacific Spirit Park, where he watched the runners train at the same time; thus began his 24-year (and counting) love affair with running.

Originally from Kamloops, B.C., Taillefer, 42, who works in training and communications for TD Bank, moved to Montreal in 2013 and joined the East Laurier Run Club. "I was intimidated at first," he says. "I had seen them on social media when I first moved there—everyone was in black, nobody was smiling ... it was scary!" But he stuck with the group, though he's also been known to frequent other run clubs in the city. "I know when I show up to run groups, the first time is very intimidating, so I've always just tried to encourage friendliness and community when I see new people who come to East Laurier.

"In summer we always hang around at the park after runs, share beers and chit chat, which is nice, because you don't get that in a lot of other run groups, where everybody just goes home afterwards. A lot of clubs were like that back then—everybody left. I thought, I can do that on my own."

Another aspect of Taillefer's discomfort was being an Anglo in a francophone city. "We're in the Plateau, and it's very bilingual, so I always try to make sure other Anglophones feel welcome," he says.

His friend, Krysta Veneruz, who urged us to consider Taillefer for this recognition, says everyone in the Montreal running community knows him: "Colin's positivity, encouragement and community involvement are electric and contagious," she says. "We need more people like Colin, who make the running scene such a fun and inclusive space."

Taillefer lives by the motto, "if you're not running, you're cheering." He says he's often moved to tears from the experience of cheering at races: "It's so inspiring, especially at a marathon. I always well up when I'm cheering." Taillefer travelled to the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon in October, where he ran his second-fastest half-marathon, and then stayed to cheer until the very last runners had finished.

"The people coming in near the end of the race are the ones who need the motivation the most—six-plus hours. They're the most inspiring," he says. "That strength and perseverance and grit. That's my favourite thing—to cheer those people on."—Brooke Smith

Colin Taillefer at the TCS Toronto Waterfront Half-Marathon



Coach Flo, as he is known, has spent the past six years as head coach at the University of Texas, Austin. Among the many awards he's earned are the 2023 U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA) Women's Outdoor National Coach of the Year and the 2022 USTFCCCA Men's Indoor Coach of the Year.

The list of athletes he has coached while in Texas—and at Stanford University and the University of Kentucky before that—includes 2017 world 400m hurdles champion Kori Carter, Olympic champion Jasmine Camacho-Quinn (100m hurdles), Olympic and world champion Omar McLeod (110m hurdles) and two-time Olympic 400m hurdles champion (and world record holder) Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone.

Another of his athletes, Keni Harrison, broke the world 100m hurdles record and earned the 2021 Olympic silver medal. At Paris 2024, the women's long jump was captured by Tara Davis-Woodhall, who spent three years with Floréal at Texas before turning pro.

Very few coaches come close to Floréal's record. It's no wonder he is frequently asked to take on additional professional athletes. "I typically don't like to take people from other programs and other coaches," the 58-year-old says. "People can be stubborn. They don't want to adapt. The training is different. 'Why do I have to do this?' they say. I have said no to probably 95 per cent of the people who ask." He describes himself as "more of a long-term person."

McLaughlin-Levrone met Floréal's long-term goals in her first year



Edrick Floréal with 2023 NCAA hardware with the Longhorns

Coach of the Year

Edrick Floréal

Edrick Floréal won five NCAA triple jump titles for the University of Arkansas back in the 1980s and set a Canadian record in the event (17.29 m) that still stands. The Montrealer has remained south of the border ever since, becoming one of the world's most sought-after coaches.

His name popped up frequently during the 2024 Olympics as athletes he has coached made history.

There was 23-year-old Julien Alfred's stunning 100m victory for the tiny island nation of Saint Lucia, Dina Asher-Smith leading Great Britain to a silver medal in the sprint relay and Ireland's sensational 22-year-old 400m runner, Rhasidat Adeleke, who finished fourth in both the 400m final and the 4x400m relay.

at Kentucky, winning the NCAA 400m hurdles title. She had planned to move with him when he took up the Texas position, but her father wanted her to go to Los Angeles.

Floréal still has strong ties to Canada. His brothers and sisters remain in Montreal, and he says he feels a debt of gratitude to Canada—the country that accepted him and his cousin, 100m Canadian record holder Bruny Surin, after they arrived from Haiti as kids. Sadly, his insanely busy schedule prevents him from coming home much.

The Texas collegiate program runs from August until June, when Floréal is normally on the European circuit with his professional athletes. Despite his renown, Floréal has never coached in Canada. (His reported annual salary of roughly US\$500,000 would be difficult, if not impossible, to match.)

So, for now, he continues to develop athletes who make an impact on the world stage, and he remains one of the greatest track and field coaches in the history of the sport.—Paul Gains



Comeback of the Year

Alysha Newman

From the depths of despair to the Olympic podium in five months—Alysha Newman’s success at the Paris Olympics represents an unparalleled comeback that shocked and delighted the athletics world.

Over the past few years, the 30-year-old resident of Caledon, Ont., had shown major medal potential, winning the 2018 Commonwealth Games and finishing fifth at the 2019 World Athletics Championships. But she had always fallen short on the biggest stage—the Olympic Games.

As any athlete will concur, however, getting things right in a pressure-filled Olympic final calls for maximum composure. Newman was the picture of self-belief as she cleared 4.85 m on her second attempt in Paris’s Stade de France to claim the Olympic bronze medal. In doing so, she added three centimetres to the Canadian record she first set five years ago at the Paris Diamond League. The silver medal went to American Katie Moon, who also cleared 4.85 m. The pair were separated by the countback rule—Newman had an earlier miss at 4.60 m, which counted against her.

This Olympic dream performance very nearly didn’t happen. Newman’s season came to an abrupt halt in March, when she sprained her ankle while warming up for the 2024 World Athletics Indoor Championships in Glasgow. Despite attempts to control the painful swelling, she ended up watching from the stands, knowing she was in the best shape of her life.

Earlier in the indoor season she had jumped 4.83 m—a personal best indoors or out—and, most significantly, she had run a personal best over 60 m (7.87 s), indicating her speed had never been better. The injury was both a physical and an emotional blow.

Together with her coaches, Doug Wood and Zdenek Krykorka, Newman mounted a comeback under the cautious advice of her physiotherapist. There were minor hiccups, which is to be expected when you have a top-class athlete driven for success. These delayed her start to the outdoor season.

According to Wood, her attitude was positive throughout those months. Had they known it would take so long for her to regain full fitness, she might have been more discouraged.

The national championships in Montreal on June 28 were a turning point. Her fitness, although not as good as in her buildup to World Indoors, was good enough that she cleared 4.75 m for her sixth Canadian title. With the competition won, she had the bar raised to 4.85 m—a height she knew would be competitive at the Olympics.

Despite missing at that height, two of her attempts were very close, giving her confidence that her fitness was quickly returning and her technique was excellent. There was time to hone her conditioning, and her Olympic bronze is testament to that.

Newman is three years older than Olympic champion Nina Kennedy, but three years younger than Moon. World record holder Yelena Isinbayeva of Russia was 31 when she won her third and final world championship in 2013, so Newman can look forward to a bright future.

There are two world outdoor championships between now and the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics—Tokyo 2025 and Beijing 2027—which must be on her radar. There is another target. Only four women have ever cleared five metres, and that barrier would represent a natural progression for Newman.

The number of athletes who can call themselves an Olympian is but a tiny percentage of those who try, and to attain a podium finish is extraordinary.—Paul Gains **R**

Nick Iwanyshyn



OPPOSITE AND ABOVE
Alysha Newman in Paris

Gearing Up for Winter Running

RUNNERS

BERNARD ABARQUEZ is a Toronto runner with a passion for the arts. He works an admin job in the corporate sector, which allows him to run with multiple local clubs every week. In 2021, to celebrate his 42nd birthday, he took on a 10-month project, doing marathon-distance runs every week for 42 weeks. He ran the 2024 TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon while contributing live updates to the race broadcast via his phone, which was mounted on a hand-held gimbal.

BENET AVERY runs with various clubs around the Toronto, training with Culture Athletics for marathons. In addition to running two businesses, Benet teaches Pilates at Studio Lagree and Fortides. At the 2024 TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon she set a Guinness World Record for the fastest marathon run in a hospital gown (3:28:22) to raise awareness for eating disorders.

Photos by Jess Baumung

Bernard

Mizuno Thermal Charge Breath Thermo Jacket **\$180**

Tracksmith Downeaster Quarter Snap **\$215**

The North Face Winter Warm Pro Pants **\$160**

SHOE Mizuno Wave Rider GTX 2

Benet

Mizuno Waterproof 20K ER Running Jacket **\$230**

Under Armour ColdGear Mock Neck Long Sleeve **\$65**

Arc'teryx Essent High-Rise Utility Legging 26" **\$170**

SHOE Altra Outroad 2







Bernard

Hoka Tecsky Waterproof Jacket **\$400**

Puma RUN Cloudspun Running Quarter-Zip Pullover **\$85**

Brooks Run Visible Tight 2.0 **\$130**

SHOE Asics Metaspeed Sky Paris



Benet

Salomon Sense Flow Vest \$90

Salomon Sense Aero Hybrid Half-Zip \$180

Mizuno Thermal Charge Breath Thermo Tight \$110

Smartwool Intraknit Merino Tech Headband \$45

NNormal Merino Socks \$40

SHOE Puma Velocity Nitro 3

Bernard

Brooks Notch Thermal Hoodie 2.0 \$98

Hoka Winter Beanie \$65



Benet

Hoka SkyGlow Half-Zip \$150

New Balance Slek High Rise Sport Legging 25" \$80

Smartwool Intraknit Merino Tech Headband \$45

SHOE Salomon S-Lab Genesis



Bernard

New Balance Athletics Graphic Packable Jacket **\$120**

MEC T2 Merino Base Layer Long Sleeve Top **\$100**

Under Armour UA Vanish Cold Weather Fitted Pants **\$95**

MEC T3 Warmest Wind Block Mitts **\$50**

SHOE Asics Metaspeed Sky Paris

Benet

Tracksmith Harbor Shell **\$278**

Salomon Sense Aero Seamless Long Sleeve T-shirt **\$100**

Under Armour ColdGear Leggings **\$65**





Benet

NNormal Trail Rain Jacket **\$220**

Smartwool Classic Thermal Merino Base Layer ¼ Zip **\$150**

Smartwool Run Legging **\$150**



Bernard

Puma RUN Ultraweave Running Rain Jacket **\$195**

Salomon Sense Aero Stow Tights **\$140**

SHOE Mizuno Wave Rider GTX 2



Bernard

Brooks Shield Hybrid Jacket 3.0 **\$180**

Arc'teryx Norvan Insulated Pants **\$240**

SHOE Mizuno Wave Rider GTX 2

Benet

TNF Summit Series Futurefleece Full-Zip Hoodie **\$220**

Mizuno Thermal Charge Breath Thermo Tight **\$110**

Smartwool Intraknit Merino Tech Headband **\$45**

SHOE Puma Velocity Nitro 3



Bernard

MEC PolarPlus Cap \$50

Benet

Mizuno Waterproof 20K ER Running Jacket \$230

Arc'teryx Essent High-Rise Utility Legging 26" \$170

SHOE Altra Outroad 2



Benet

Salomon Sense Aero Seamless Long Sleeve T-shirt \$100

Smartwool Intraknit Merino Tech Headband \$45

Salomon Active Skin 4 (2 flasks included) \$100



Bernard

Arc'teryx Norvan Insulated Vest \$220

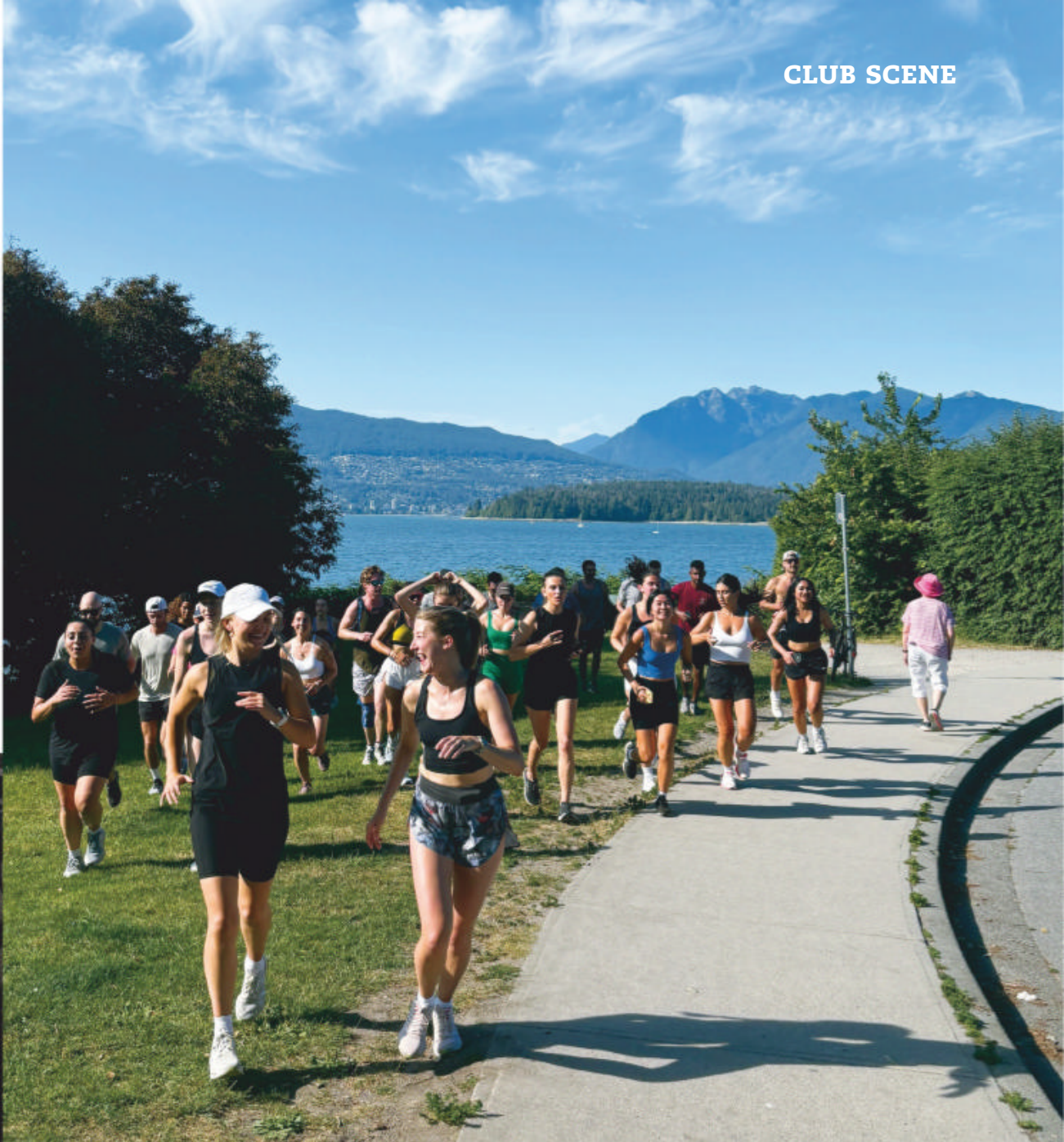
Arc'teryx Rho LT Hoody \$140 **R**

Turf Run Club Vancouver

If you're looking to meet other runners in Vancouver, this new Kitsilano club offers a casual, social vibe



Angela Driscoll



By Madeleine Kelly

As a former college basketball player who was interested in getting into distance running, Angela Driscoll noticed a gap in the run club scene in Vancouver. Her aspirations weren't to become a world-beater or do long, arduous workouts; she just wanted to move her body regularly and meet new friends. When she couldn't find a club like that, she started her own.

"I'd been to a few clubs in the city, and they were fun and a good way to meet people, but I always felt they were a little too competitive," she says. She started Turf Run Club out of Turf, a Pilates studio and eatery in Kitsilano, where the group has been meeting every Friday at 5 p.m. since May 2024. "I was worried people wouldn't like a Friday night run club," Driscoll says, "but I've actually gotten excellent feedback. I want people of all levels to come and run, and then we always meet back at Turf for a beverage. We had free beer all summer!"

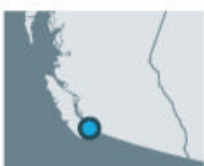
Driscoll, who works in brand partnerships, loves bringing local businesses into the fold. "We've partnered with a local emerging shoe brand and a healthy energy drink brand," she says, in addition to the aforementioned summer beers from a local brewery. "It's really nice to engage with so many aspects of the running community, from the runners themselves to the new and local brands," she adds.

Driscoll creates a new five- to six-kilometre route every week, and every route includes at least a short distance along the ocean. "You can't run in Kitsilano and not check out the ocean," she says. The club is free and is open to all levels, attracting Olympians and newbies alike. "It's great to see them all moving together," she says.

Currently the club has a consistent group of 30 to 40 runners who come out weekly, but sometimes sees as many as 50. "It's a great way to kick off your weekend," Driscoll says, and she's not deterred by the city's rainy months. "That's Vancouver for you," she says. "Running is one of the few things you can do year-round, so as long as people are into it, we'll keep running." **R**

Madeleine Kelly, who lives in Hamilton, is an Olympian and three-time national champion in the 800m. She has also represented Canada at the World Athletics Indoor Championships, World Athletics Championships and Commonwealth Games.

TURF RUN CLUB
VANCOUVER,
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Club Stats

FOUNDED 2024

MEMBERS 30 to 50

FITNESS LEVELS All

FEES \$0

WHERE Turf in Kitsilano (2041 W 4th Ave.)

WHEN Friday evenings at 5 p.m.

DISTANCE 5 to 6 km

INSTAGRAM @turfiving

I WANTED
TO SEE
HOW FAR
I COULD
GO



Kate Beirness

Like many runners, the Toronto-based sportscaster embraced the sport during the pandemic, and the love affair continues

By Paul Baswick

Kate Beirness's achievements as an athlete and broadcaster have been powered by a fusion of passion and talent—except, perhaps, when it comes to running. Her earliest strides in that department may have had more to do with stubbornness.

"I think the biggest problem I had with running was that I was terrible at it," the award-winning TSN on-air personality recalls of childhood races in her hometown of Port Perry, Ont. "You can ask my mother—my goal as a cross-country runner was simply not to place last. I was never naturally a runner, by any stretch of the imagination. If I'm honest, I was so bad at it, it was ridiculous."

But in spite of her lack of innate ability, finish-line frustration was more the exception than the rule for Beirness, whose zeal for competitive play saw her excel in a host of sports, with one in particular towering above the rest.

"I love basketball more than any other sport that I played," says Beirness, whose prowess as a high school player appeared to put her on a path to a career in the pros. "But in Grade 12 I blew my right ACL, which basically meant my knee separated, and I could no longer play."

Far from quashing her hoop dreams, the setback led her down a path where basketball could still take centre court in her career. Cutting her chops on campus radio while completing a bachelor of commerce degree at Ontario Tech University, Beirness joined TSN in 2009, where she has hosted several of the network's most popular programs, including *SportsCentre*, the *CFL on TSN* and *Toronto Raptors Basketball*.

Throughout her career, the Under Armour ambassador has continued to promote the benefits of physical fitness. At the height of the pandemic, her own commitment to staying active prompted Beirness to re-examine her relationship with running. "That's when all the gyms were closed, and, being very energetic, I had to do something with my body," she says. "Running became my only relief."

She adds that running was also valuable to her mental health. "My late partner had at the time been diagnosed with cancer, and

my dad made me promise that I wouldn't lose myself. Running was something I could do individually that would take my mind away to a different place. I started trying to see how far I could actually go, and what I could accomplish."

To test her limits, she set a goal of finishing the marathon at the 2023 Baltimore Running Festival in five hours—a time target she beat by more than 15 minutes. "I had never done anything farther than a half-marathon," she says. "I was surprised how calm I was at the start line. I can't believe how much I enjoyed the experience."

Having been bitten by the marathon bug,

Beirness is now planning to tackle another 42.2-km, this time in Prague, in May.

"My goal for Prague is to finish in under 4:30, and I hope to keep chopping that time down to the point where, by the time I'm 60 [she is 40], I can qualify for Boston," she says.

"I think what I'd love to do is get five marathons under my belt. I don't know why five sticks out in my mind, but I'd like to run those marathons in cities I've never visited.

"After that, we'll see how my body's feeling, and go from there." **R**

Paul Baswick is a writer and runner who lives in Port Colborne, Ont.

NEW Boston Qualifying Course!



Fredericton Marathon 2025

STEWART MCKELVEY
LAWYERS • AVOCATS

REGISTER NOW
May 10 & 11, 2025
Fredericton, New Brunswick
Elite 5k, 5k, 10k, 21.1k & 42.2k

www.frederictonmarathon.com



Beantown, It's Been A While

When will we see another Canadian win the Boston Marathon?

By Larry Humber

I hate to take a shot at my home and native land, but somebody has to. Much has been made about teams from the Great White North coming up short in hockey (no Canadian team has hoisted the Stanley Cup since 1993)—but sadder still is our recent record in the most revered of marathons, the Boston Marathon. Canucks once made a sizeable splash in Beantown (at least, our men did), but we've gone seriously south since then, with nothing to show since Jacqueline Gareau's win in 1980 (more about that in a moment).

LEFT Jacqueline Gareau on her way to winning the 1980 Boston Marathon

Amazingly, in the 80-year span between the launch of the Boston Marathon in 1897 through Jerome Drayton's victory in 1977, 16 Canadian men brought home the bacon (or, rather, the wreath woven of olive branches, which is all they got in those days). That's one every five years. So what has happened in the nearly half-century since one of ours last got it done?

Ask the Kenyans and Ethiopians, who have been kicking butt since shortly after Drayton's victory, winning it a whopping 56 times—32 times for men and 22 for women, with two disqualifications due to doping—since 1988, the first year an East African runner (Kenya's Ibrahim Hussein) won. That's twice as many wins as Canada can boast, and we've been in it since day one. (A Nova Scotian named Ronald MacDonald won the second running, over just 23 other competitors.)

The U.S. still leads, with 43 wins, Clarence Demar declaring victory a whopping seven times and "Boston Billy" Rodgers four more—the same number as the winningest Canadian, Gérard Côté of Saint-Barnabé-Sud, Que. Like Canucks, Americans have been all but invisible in recent years, Meb Keflezighi taking top honours in 2014, the lone "homegrown" champion since Greg Meyer in 1983. (Keflezighi was born in Eritrea, which, at the time, was part of Ethiopia.) American women were in the picture more recently, with Des Linden winning in 2018.

In 1980, the lone Canadian woman to win, Jacqueline Gareau of Rivière-Rouge, Que., had to wait eight days to be declared champion after it was confirmed that the famous cheater, Rosie Ruiz, had only covered the last half mile. Gareau, of course, didn't get to touch the finish tape on the day of her victory, but she was given that honour at a special ceremony in 2005.

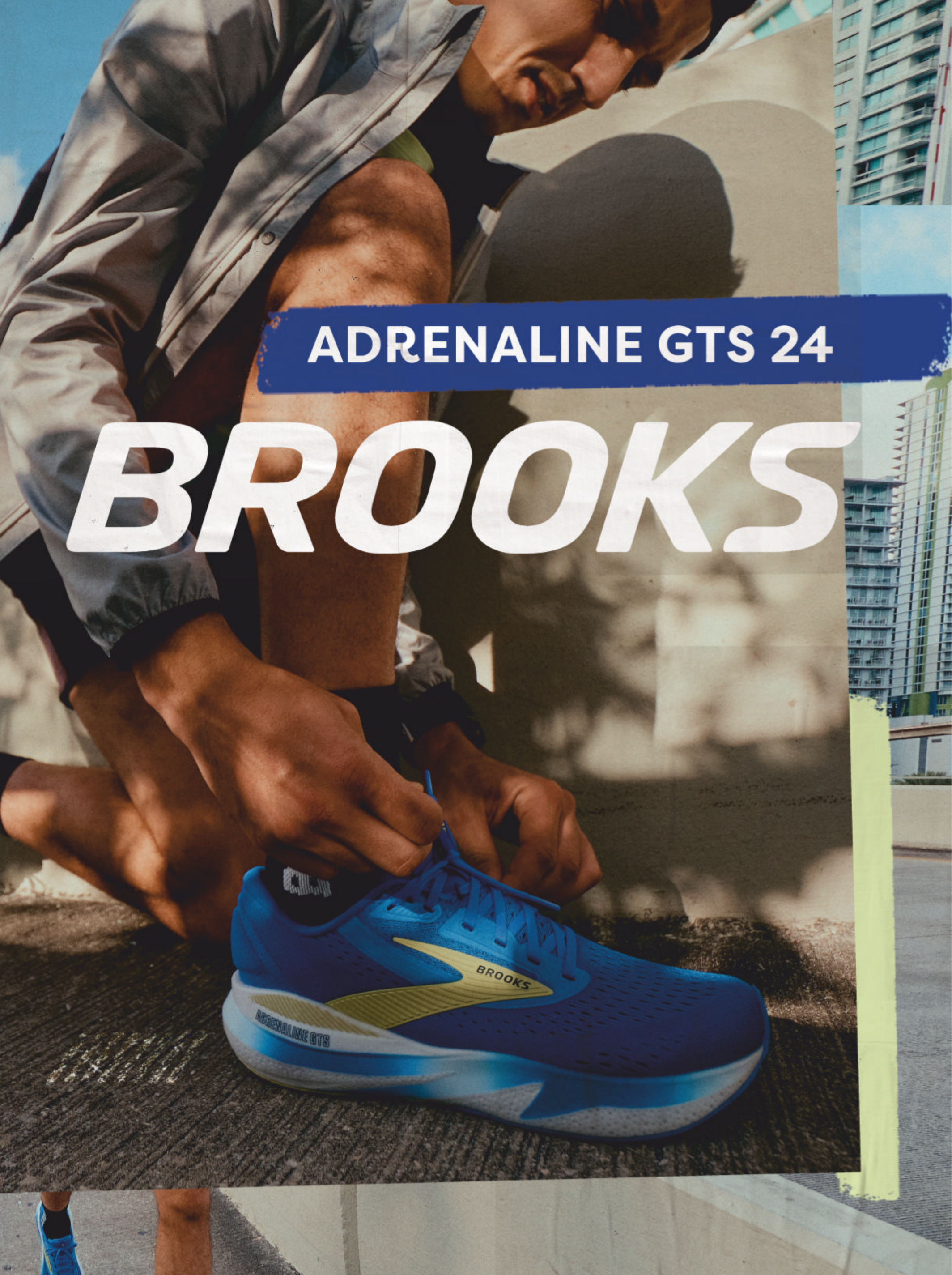
Eight countries have outperformed us in the women's event, needing just two wins to do so; the U.S. tops the table with 16. Kenya is next with 14 (and two disqualifications due to doping).

Canadians have fared significantly better in the wheelchair division, with André Viger winning the men's event three times (the last time in 1987) and Josh Cassidy in 2012. No Canadian has ever won the women's wheelchair event.

Drayton, now almost 80, was interviewed by Paul Gains for *Canadian Running* in 2013, and told Gains he had trained as much as 300 km a week. Did he miss it? Nope. "It's a fickle sport," Drayton said. "You can get injured overnight. I don't know how long people last on average—maybe 10 years. I would say go to school, get a degree and if you can get a part-time job, you have something to fall back on. I have my pension. I am happy now."

Can a Canadian win it again? It seems like a long shot. Then again, nobody gave the Edmonton Oilers much of a chance last season, and they came within a game of going all the way. So, maybe there's hope for us yet. **R**

Larry Humber prefers 10Ks to marathons, and more recently has become a long-distance cyclist, with many forays to France and elsewhere. He has written for a number of sporting and travel publications.



ADRENALINE GTS 24

BROOKS



©2024 ASICS Canada Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

ア
シ
ッ
ク
ス

feel comfort **find calm**

Experience ultimate cloudlike
cushioning that goes the distance.
Move your body, move your mind.

GEL-NIMBUS® 27